

Accountability Report Transmittal Form

Agency Name: **South Carolina Forestry Commission**

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South Carolina Forestry Commission
Annual Accountability Report
Fiscal Year 2007 – 2008

SECTION I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. *Agency Purpose, Mission, Vision and Values:*

The South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) Purpose:

Protect, manage and enhance the forest resources of South Carolina.

The SCFC Mission:

The mission of SCFC is to protect, promote, enhance, and nurture the woodlands of South Carolina, and to educate the public about forestry issues, in a manner consistent with achieving the greatest good for its citizens.

The SCFC Vision:

Across all ownerships, South Carolina's forest resources are managed sustainably to support an expanding forest products manufacturing industry while providing environmental services such as clean air, clean water, recreation, and wildlife habitat.

The SCFC Values:

- Integrity
- Fairness
- Respect
- Passion
- Efficiency
- Hard Work

2. *Major achievements from past year:*

- **Strategic Plan Implementation/Progress** – The Commissioners, State Forester, Deputy State Forester, and the executive team continue to monitor accomplishments for goals and action items on a quarterly basis. Potential new initiatives for action are identified and initiatives are translated into objectives and success criteria for respective program areas and employees.
- **Forest Resource Development** – During the 2008 fiscal year, the SCFC Resource Development Division represented the agency and forestry community through 18 statewide and regional economic development organizations. The SCFC actively participated in 21 economic development projects, 20 of which involved the utilization of biomass in energy-related projects. An Impact Analysis for Planning (IMPLAN) study showed forestry is the #1 manufacturing industry in South Carolina in terms of employment and payroll. Forestry contributes over \$17 billion in total industry output to South Carolina's economy.
- **Incident Management Teams (IMT)** – The agency was designated by the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) to assist with the development of four multi-disciplinary IMTs and one state level team made up of Forestry Commission personnel. In February 2008, we participated in a Weapons of Mass Destruction exercise in Myrtle Beach at the Hard Rock Theme Park. The SCFC Type II IMT responded as if this were a real

disaster. There were over 600 people from various agencies participating in this exercise; twenty-three were SCFC personnel.

- **Wildfire Prevention Teams** – A statewide wildfire prevention effort was made prior to the 2008 spring wildfire season to promote safe debris burning. With help from local fire departments and other cooperators, prevention efforts included distribution of promotional materials, safe burning demonstrations, interviews with local media, public service announcements and billboards. *Think Before You Burn* caution signs were installed in highly visible locations in high risk communities. Comparing FY 07 with FY 08 fire data, the percentage of wildland fires that came from debris burning declined by 2% statewide. Every fire prevented is one less incident requiring resource allocation and protection of life and property.
- **Southern Pine Beetle Prevention Program** – The southern pine beetle, endemic to SC, builds to epidemic levels on a 5 to 10 year cycle. Since 1995, SC has suffered the two worst outbreaks on record, with landowner property losses exceeding a half-billion dollars. SCFC developed a Southern Pine Beetle Prevention Program to reduce losses on privately owned woodlands, with a focus on implementation of practices to keep pine stands healthy. During the year 227 landowners have completed southern pine beetle prevention restoration practices on over 5,400 acres.
- **Succession Planning/Professional Development** – TERI departures continue to create opportunities for realignment of job functions and selection of replacements prior to retirements. To enable a smoother transition, the agency selects replacements for key personnel prior to their retirement date.

A three-stage career ladder for Forestry Commission Dispatchers was developed by the Dispatch Coordinator and Regional Dispatch Managers and implemented in 2007. It allows Dispatchers to move from Dispatcher I to Dispatcher III by accumulating years of experience, completing courses in wildfire and prescribed fire management, assisting and then supervising and training new Dispatchers. During the year, approximately 70% of the dispatchers took advantage of the career path development program.

- **Employee Recognition** – The agency continues to make efforts to improve employee appreciation efforts and recognition for significant achievements. Employee luncheons were held during the month of May in conjunction with Public Service Recognition Week. Employees are recognized during agency staff meetings and in the agency's weekly bulletin for achievements such as forestry registration, service awards, Certified Public Management and Executive Institute graduations. Retiring employees are recognized as appropriate to their length of service and personal desires in staff meetings and special events.

3. *Key strategic goals for present and future years:*

- Protect life, property, and the forest resource from the increasing threat of wildfire and other hazards as the population expands into forested areas. Continue the increased emphasis on the use of prescribed burning, as a means for reducing hazardous fuels, with the SC Prescribed Fire Council.
- Continue to train and qualify one State Incident Management Team (IMT) and coordinate the training and qualification of four Regional IMTs. Begin to shift from classroom training to exercises and completion of task books.

- Maintain an effective, well-trained, well-equipped, and diverse workforce, while continuing to assess and realign in response to on-going retirements and the changing needs and desires of customers. Undertake steps to transition to a more competitively paid firefighter workforce with firefighters reporting to an agency facility daily to reduce employee turnover and incident response time.
- Improve the effectiveness of internal communications, stressing individual employee roles in the implementation of the strategic plan.
- Raise awareness among the public and decision-makers of the economic, environmental, and social benefits of a well managed, healthy forest resource.
- Provide the basic data needed to assess the forest resource, its condition, and the potential for the development or expansion of sustainable markets for forest products and ecosystem services in support of SC's Competitiveness Initiative.
- Provide technical assistance to landowners, communities, and state agencies.
- Continue to develop land ownership/management policies, procedures, and plans to enhance the management and effectiveness of the state forest system and increase awareness of benefits of state forest management model.
- Strengthen existing alliances and develop new alliances that will assist with accomplishing key strategic goals.

4. *Key strategic challenges:*

- Public demands for forestry services, including fire prevention and suppression and forest management, have increased while SCFC staffing and budgets have declined. Foresters and forest technician supervisors have increased areas of responsibility and geographical coverage. Waiting lists exist for some public services.
- Past budget reductions, with increasing equipment costs have made it necessary to lengthen the replacement schedule for firefighting equipment. Rising operating costs, especially fuel prices, are increasing the cost of detecting and suppressing wildland fires. All of these decrease the agency's ability to keep pace with technological advances in equipment needed for mission critical functions. Loss of firefighter positions and funds to replace firefighting equipment on a safe and efficient replacement schedule have placed the agency's capacity to respond to critical fire emergency needs in jeopardy. Should weather conditions create severe fire conditions for a prolonged duration, the agency's ability to respond to wildfires would be inadequate. Improvements in technology to provide communication necessary for emergency response are available, yet implementation of new technology lags due to budgetary limitations.
- Loss of experienced personnel through retirements, with more stringent employment requirements and mandated training for firefighters and dispatchers, coupled with very low starting salaries, makes hiring and retaining qualified personnel very difficult. The agency is faced with challenges of a rapidly retiring workforce; training and transfer of knowledge are a top priority. Salaries have not kept pace with increased responsibilities, nor with salaries in other organizations.

- The loss of cooperator (forest industry) firefighter capacity, due to the sale of forest industry lands and subsequent elimination of firefighting personnel and equipment, has placed greater demands on the agency's limited firefighting resources.
- The state's changing demographic and population expansion into rural areas have contributed to the fragmentation of forest ownership, increased the risk of fire to lives, homes, and property and created a large number of new forest landowners. Lacking a rural background, these landowners are unaware of basic management techniques needed to keep their woodlands healthy and productive. This is having an especially adverse impact on the use of prescribed fire in the state. Agency personnel must monitor and assist with proposed regulations at the state and local level to ensure that the ability to manage woodlands is retained.

5. *How the accountability report is used to improve organizational performance:*

The accountability report is utilized by the SCFC in developing budget requests, monitoring established performance measures, updating or establishing benchmarks, and documenting continuous improvement efforts. Performance measures are tied directly to the agency's mission, strategic plan and implementation/status of goals and action items in the plan. Specific goals and action items are incorporated into employees' performance planning stages.

SECTION II – ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

1. *Main products and services and the primary methods by which these are delivered:*

Protect the Resource

The SCFC has a statewide wildfire prevention, detection and control network in place. According to the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-90, “It shall take such action and afford such organized means as may be necessary to prevent, control and extinguish fires, including the enforcement of any and all laws pertaining to the protection of the forests and woodlands in the State.”

The SCFC conducts wildfire prevention and ‘Firewise’ programs, including the assessment of risk for communities located in areas where wildfires have historically occurred and in new developments with significant fire hazards. Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) are developed to provide homeowners, community planners, Fire Departments, and SCFC wildland firefighters with an outline of the actions needed to reduce wildfire hazard.

The SCFC provides landowners with wildland fire suppression through a network of firefighters and equipment strategically located throughout the state. Dispatching the closest available firefighting unit is accomplished through three regional dispatch centers. To further minimize the effect of wildfire, SCFC personnel conduct burns to reduce hazardous fuels, improve wildlife habitat, and prepare sites for reforestation.

The Law Enforcement Program strives to reduce wildfire occurrence, woods arson and forest product theft and fraud through the enforcement of state laws.

The SCFC trains and develops IMTs to improve the capability of the state to manage wildfires, natural disasters, or other large incidents. The Incident Management Team (IMT) Coordinator facilitates the development of nationally-qualified IMTs within the Forestry Commission and ensures consistency among four multi-disciplinary (non-SCFC) IMTs located in each region of the State.

SCFC educates landowners and organizations in how to minimize impacts from non-fire hazards like tornados, ice storms, insect and disease. In actual incidents agencies assist both the public and other agencies with damage and disaster response.

The SCFC periodically surveys the state for forest insect and disease infestations and provides agency foresters and landowners access to up-to-date information, diagnosis of specific problems and recommendations for control. Agency staff includes an entomologist, a forester, and a technician working from a fully equipped diagnostic lab. The SCFC has instituted a Southern Pine Beetle Prevention/Restoration Program to provide advice to landowners and a cost-share program to aid them in restoring areas impacted by the beetle and treating areas to minimize future SPB damage.

The SCFC is the designated agency in South Carolina to provide public oversight and guidance for technical forest management practices. The agency has established approved Best Management Practices (BMPs) and routinely monitors compliance with BMP guidelines on sites where timber harvesting or other forestry practices are in progress to ensure protection of water quality and soil productivity and compliance with state and federal laws and policies.

Manage the Resource

SCFC foresters examine woodlands at the request of landowners, with an emphasis on assisting new landowners and landowners that previously have not utilized the assistance of a professional forester. According to the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-90, “It shall give such advice, assistance and cooperation as may be practical to private owners of land ...”

SCFC foresters write woodland management plans that include descriptions of each forest stand, recommended practices to meet the objectives of the landowner, and a property map. Foresters provide guidance relating to timber harvesting, site preparation, timber stand improvement, reforestation, and prescribed burning. They refer landowners to private consulting foresters when assistance needed is extensive or prolonged.

SCFC foresters recommend appropriate financial assistance programs to help landowners complete forestry improvement projects and assist landowners with the application process and implementation of forestry practices. The agency serves as a critical link by administering and delivering state and federal funds to private landowners. Prescribed burning services and timber marking services are offered for a fee.

To assist the state's landowners with reforestation, the Commission produces and sells bareroot and containerized seedlings grown at its nursery in Edgefield, SC. Native pine and hardwood species are available to fill niche markets and demands and ensure citizens access to high quality growing stock. The SCFC Nursery and Tree Improvement Program operates solely on the receipts from seedling, cone, and seed sales.

The SCFC manages Sand Hills, Manchester, Harbison, Poe Creek and Wee Tee State Forests for sustainable forestry, wildlife management, recreation and public education purposes. Seventy-five percent of the revenues from state forest activities, primarily sale of forest products, fund all state forest activities, and 25% of the revenue is returned to county governments of origin for their educational systems. The SCFC provides forest management assistance to other state agencies including the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Corrections, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Department of Mental Health, Department of Transportation and University of South Carolina.

One statewide Urban Forestry Coordinator and three regional urban foresters work with urban residents, city planners, developers, contractors and local government to improve their capability to manage forest resources within urban environments.

Raise Awareness about the Resource

The SCFC is responsible for educating the public about the economic and environmental benefits of a well-managed forest resource. According to the South Carolina Code of laws, Section 48-23-90, “It shall...promote...a proper appreciation by the public of the advantages of forestry and the benefits to be derived from forest culture and preservation.” Information and Education staff members produce technical and information materials, news releases, web-based material and audio-visual programs to explain forestry programs, promote SCFC services, and educate various publics about the benefits of forests, fire prevention, and forest management. Education staff writes curricula, schedules, and instructs formal forestry education programs for school groups and teachers. SCFC staff support the agency’s popular Wood Magic Forest Fair and Teachers Tour programs.

SCFC personnel, from both headquarters and field offices, take an active role promoting the value of forestry to the state and the benefits of managing the forest resource. Presentations are made at landowner association meetings and tours, professional meetings

and civic and environmental organizations. SCFC foresters actively support the Tree Farm program, recognizing landowners who manage forestland according to professional standards.

State forests provide education about forest management through demonstration of sound forest management, programs, brochures and signage.

2. *Key Customer groups and their key requirements/expectations:*

Owners and users of forestland

Requirements/expectations: protect their woodlands, lives, and property, help manage forests by providing professional assistance; enhance forest resources to help insure that state's forest industry and markets for forest products remain financially healthy and positively impact forest law and policy to enhance owner opportunities.

Other State Agencies (who own woodlands)

Requirements/expectations: protect their woodlands and property, help manage forests by providing professional assistance, and assist them in being good stewards of the public lands for which they are responsible.

SC Law Enforcement Division/SC Emergency Management Division

Requirements/expectations: enhance state capability to respond to catastrophic events by developing all-hazard IMTs; provide incident command system (ICS) training to other agencies to ensure that natural and man-made disasters are managed effectively.

City and county fire and emergency services

Requirements/expectations: partner with them in wildland/interface fire control; raise the awareness regarding the challenges facing this state with wildland fires, especially the fires occurring in wildland urban interface (WUI) areas.

Rural-Urban interface residents and interest groups

Requirements/expectations: protect their lives and property from wildland fire; raise the awareness regarding the challenges facing this state from wildland fires; enhance the forest resource to provide better stewardship of all the state's natural resources.

Forest industry

Requirements/expectations: protect their woodlands; provide management assistance to private forest owners to help insure stable wood supplies; enhance the resource to help insure future wood supplies and a strong forest industry within the state; help prepare to meet the future demands that will be placed on our forest resources.

State forests visitors and user groups

Requirements/expectations: protect the state owned woodlands, provide management to meet their recreational needs; enhance our state forests by being good stewards of the land; raise awareness about the importance and benefits of our state forests.

Urban residents and businesses

Requirements/expectations: provide management assistance with the urban forests located in the towns and cities of this state; assist in the protection of our urban forests from insect, disease and fire threats; raise awareness about the importance of our urban forest.

Earth science teachers and students

Requirements/expectations: help raise the awareness about SC forest resources by providing educational training, resources, and opportunities to teachers and students.

3. *Key stakeholder groups (other than customers):*

- Employees
- Commissioners
- County Forestry Boards
- Local governments: county and city councils
- Governmental Regulatory Agencies
- State Legislative members
- State of South Carolina

4. *Key suppliers and partners:*

Suppliers: Vehicle equipment manufacturers, heavy equipment manufacturers and dealers, gasoline vendors, federal excess property inventory system, vehicle repair garages and parts suppliers, communication equipment dealers and repair businesses, forestry equipment suppliers, office supply vendors, printing businesses and media outlets, and aerial detection contractors

Partners: State and Federal Agencies such as South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD), South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) -State Climatology Office, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Association of State Foresters (NASF), Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF), National Park Service (NPS), National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), South Carolina Wildlife Federation (SCWF), National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), Private Consulting Foresters (PCF), Clemson University, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Conservation Fund, and Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense, National Weather Service, and United States Environmental Protection Agency

5. *Operating locations:*

Personnel are assigned positions throughout the state through a series of zone, unit, regional, and headquarter offices. The largest single group of employees, initial attack firefighters, report directly from their residences in responding to wildland fires. Regional administrative and support offices are located in Newberry, Florence, and Walterboro. Central emergency dispatch centers are co-located at the regional office sites. A forest seedling nursery is located in Edgefield County, and a forest seed orchard is located in Jasper County. Major property holdings include Manchester State Forest in Sumter County, Sand Hills State Forest in Chesterfield and Darlington Counties, Harbison State Forest in Richland County, Poe Creek State Forest in Pickens County, and Wee Tee State Forest in Williamsburg County.

6. *Number of employees segmented by employee category:*

The SCFC has a total of 379 employees. Two of these positions are unclassified.

7. *Regulatory environment:*

SCFC Operations are authorized by the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-10 to Section 48-23-295.

The major products and services of the SCFC are authorized and required by the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-90, *General Duties of Commission* as stated below:

The Commission shall inquire into and make an annual report to the General Assembly upon the forest conditions in the State, with reference to the preservation of forests, the effect of the destruction of forests upon the general welfare of the State and other matters pertaining to the subject of forestry and tree growth, including recommendations to the public generally as to reforestation.

It shall take such action and afford such organized means as may be necessary to prevent, control and extinguish fires, including the enforcement of any and all laws pertaining to the protection of the forests and woodlands of the State.

It shall give such advice, assistance and cooperation as may be practical to private owners of land and promote, so far as it may be able, a proper appreciation by the public of the advantages of forestry and the benefits to be derived from forest culture and preservation.

It shall cooperate with the Federal Government in the distribution of funds allotted to the State for forestry purposes and shall assist in the enforcement of all laws pertaining thereto. It shall have the control of the expenditure of all funds received by it.

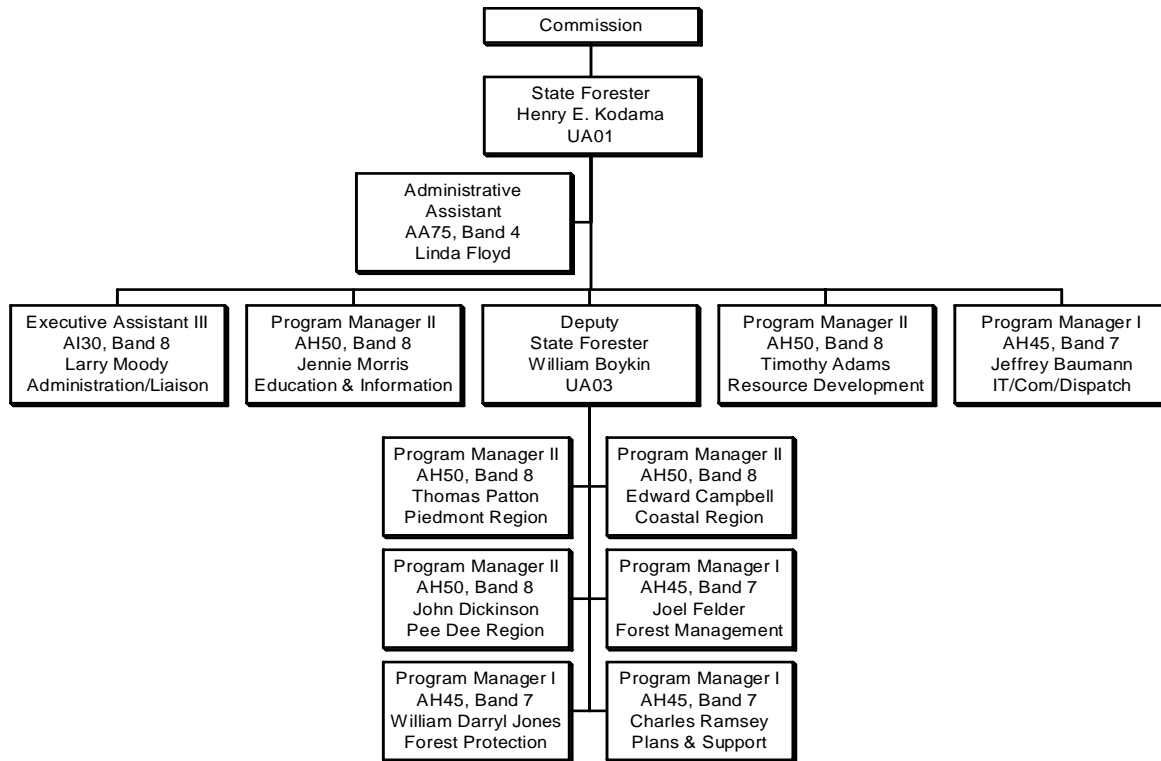
8. *Performance improvement system(s):*

The accountability report is utilized by the SCFC in developing budget requests, monitoring established performance measures, updating or establishing benchmarks, and documenting continuous improvement efforts. Performance measures are tied directly to the agency's mission, strategic plan and implementation/status of goals and action items in the plan.

Performance expectations are determined through one or more of the following: review of past organizational performance, review of other organizations' performance, input from employees primarily responsible for carrying out and monitoring the program, and feedback from customers. The results of the review and input are assessed and evaluated to ensure the current needs of the customers are met. Performance expectations may be modified based on the information. The agency has established and continues to build the Plans and Support staff, which has the responsibility for monitoring and reporting on progress toward strategic goals and objectives.

Performance expectations are deployed and communicated through the strategic and action plans, the performance review planning process, and follow-up meetings/discussions. Commitment and performance are achieved and supported through periodic and on-going reviews of expectations and progress. Specific goals and action items are incorporated into employees' performance planning stages to the lowest supervisory level within our organization.

9 **Organizational Structure Chart:**
South Carolina Forestry Commission
Organizational Chart



10. Expenditures/Appropriations Chart**Accountability Report Appropriations/Expenditures Chart****Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations**

Major Budget Categories	FY 06-07 Actual Expenditures		FY 07-08 Actual Expenditures		FY 08-09 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$11,584,578	\$9,217,588	\$12,552,947	\$10,220,544	\$13,318,396	\$10,170,470
Other Operating	\$6,331,482	\$2,748,468	\$7,634,687	\$4,051,606	\$10,895,577	\$3,453,185
Special Items	\$757,887	\$200,000	\$866,529	\$200,000	\$1,000,000	\$200,000
Permanent Improvements	\$292,904	\$268,290	\$74,643			
Case Services						
Distributions to Subdivisions	\$1,748,698		\$1,798,502		\$2,406,600	
Fringe Benefits	\$4,327,661	\$3,527,168	\$4,678,347	\$3,885,422	\$4,763,650	\$3,733,925
Non-recurring	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$150,000	\$150,000		
Total	\$26,043,210	\$16,961,514	\$27,755,655	\$18,507,572	\$32,384,223	\$17,557,580

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	FY 06-07 Actual Expenditures	FY 07-08 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$0	\$150,000
Capital Reserve Funds	\$0	\$0
Bonds	\$0	\$0

11. Major Program Areas Chart:

Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 06-07 Budget Expenditures	FY 07-08 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross Reference for Financial Results*
II Forest Landowners Assistance	<u>Forest Protection</u> To ensure their future health, South Carolina's forests must be protected from harm to include fire, disease, pests and other natural and human-caused factors.	State: 12,805,044 Federal: 2,890,128 Other: 424,041 Total: 16,119,213 % of Total Budget: 62%	State: 14,286,196 Federal: 2,901,571 Other: 367,582 Total: 17,555,349 % of Total Budget: 63%	7.3-1
II Forest Landowners Assistance	<u>Forest Management</u> The SCFC delivers financial and technical assistance to forest landowners, communities and the public while addressing social and environmental concerns.	State: 1,687,364 Federal: 1,252,482 Other: 901,301 Total: 3,841,147 % of Total Budget: 15%	State: 1,961,732 Federal: 984,660 Other: 978,904 Total: 3,925,296 % of Total Budget: 14%	7.3-1
III State Forests	<u>State Forests</u> Management, development and protection of timber, wildlife and endangered species and other resources. An ample productive forestland base and an economic climate conducive to forestry based business are essential if forest landowners of South Carolina are to practice sustainable forest management.	State: 0 Federal: 411 Other: 2,679,807 Total: 2,680,218 % of Total Budget: 10%	State: 0 Federal: 0 Other: 2,746,865 Total: 2,746,865 % of Total Budget: 10%	7.3-1

Below: List any programs not included above and show the remainder of expenditures by source of funds.

Remainder of Expenditures	State: 2,469,105	State: 2,259,644
Resource Development	Federal: 491,407	Federal: 611,591
Best Management Practices	Other: 442,118	Other: 656,910
Nurseries and Tree Improvement	Total: 3,402,630	Total: 3,528,145
Forest Information & Outreach	% of Total Budget: 13%	% of Total Budget: 13%
Administration		

*Key Cross-References are a link to the Category 7 – Business Results. These References provide a Chart number that is included in the 7th section of this document.

SECTION III – ELEMENTS OF THE MALCOLM BALDRIGE CRITERIA

CATEGORY I– SENIOR LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

1.1 How do senior leaders set, deploy and ensure two-way communication for:

1.1a Short and long term organizational direction and organizational priorities?

Senior leaders (agency director, his staff, and division directors) met with Commissioners, employees, stakeholders, and customers during the year to discuss and review direction and priorities. The strategic plan serves as the primary guide for short and long term direction and priorities for the present through the next three to five years. Additionally, agency leadership and staff monitor for new issues that may arise in the Executive & Legislative branches of state government, the federal government, as well as within the forestry community across the state, the region and the nation. The agency director and a number of program managers and employees serve on local, state, regional, and/or national forestry related committees.

Deployment and communication are accomplished through the agency's weekly news bulletins and various meetings with employees, customers, and stakeholders. Selected action items are included in employee performance evaluation planning stages.

1.1b Performance expectations?

Performance expectations are determined through one or more of the following: internal review of past performance, review of other organizations' performances, input from employees responsible for programs, feedback from customers, audits, program reviews by the USDA Forest Service.

Performance expectations are deployed and communicated through the strategic and action plans, the performance planning stage and review process, monthly staff meetings and discussions with personnel. Commitment and performance are achieved and supported through periodic and on-going reviews of expectations and progress with employees.

1.1c Organizational values?

Organizational values have been reviewed and revised by agency leadership. Agency leadership strives to model these values during regular interaction with employees.

1.1d Ethical behavior?

The senior leadership of the agency reviewed the mission, vision and values of the agency. There is a genuine understanding of the concept of leading by example and the senior leaders strive to provide guidance, make decisions and represent the agency according to the SCFC values. Employees of the agency carry out their responsibilities according to the ethical standards of their individual professions (i.e. forestry, accounting, human resources.) There have been conscious efforts and actions taken to demonstrate the stated values of the agency. For example, the lines of communication between senior leadership and employees, partners and stakeholders have increased. This action touches on several of the agency's values. The agency also solicits feedback from landowners regarding the services and professionalism received.

1.2 How do senior leaders establish and promote a focus on customers and other stakeholders?

Agency leaders periodically meet with customers and stakeholders to discuss agency, customer and stakeholder priorities and needs.

Customer feedback and input on forestry services and issues such as seedling sales, services work, technical forest management assistance, stewardship management assistance, and notification of wildfires are solicited through surveys, and focus groups. Recreational users of state forests participate in advisory councils.

1.3 How does the organization address the current and potential impact on the public of its programs, services, facilities and operations, including associated risks?

Current and potential impacts and risks are identified by seeking Commissioner, employee, customer, public, and partner input/feedback.

Impacts and risks are addressed through review by program managers, agency leaders and Commissioners, as well as through legal, financial, and insurance consultations.

1.4 How do senior leaders maintain fiscal, legal, and regulatory accountability?

Fiscal, legal and regulatory accountability are maintained through the use of policies, procedures, and internal and external controls. Controls are in place to maintain a separation of duties in the fiscal area. This, along with the use of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), insures fiscal responsibility and eliminates opportunity for fraud. Monthly reviews of budget status in relation to appropriations and adherence to the State Procurement Code sustain legal accountability. Use of the State Attorney General's Office and private attorneys to deal with Human Resource complaints, lawsuits or other legal and regulatory issues insures accountability. The Internal Auditor, State Auditor's Office and the USDA Forest Service regularly conduct audits and reviews to insure compliance with State and Federal laws, rules and regulations.

1.5 What performance measures do senior leaders regularly review to inform them on needed actions?

- Customer satisfaction levels for forest tree seedlings, services, and forestry assistance, (Graphs 7.2-1; 7.2-2; 7.2-3)
- Forest based economic development impact (Graphs 7.1-1a&b)
- Forest Inventory Analysis Productivity (Graph 7.1-2)
- Fire response times & Southern states average fire sizes (Graphs 7.1-3; 7.1-4)
- Timber theft recovery rates (Graph 7.1-5)
- Law Enforcement Investigations/Prosecutions (Graph 7.1-6)
- Best management practices compliance trends (Graph 7.1-7)
- Southern Pine Beetle losses (Graph 7.1-8)
- Raise the Awareness About the Resource (Graphs 7.1-9a&b & 7.1-10)
- Financial (Graphs 7.3-1 through 7.3-8)
- Employee turnover rates/ satisfaction (Graph 7.4-1)
- Health and Safety (Graph 7.4-2)

1.6 How do senior leaders use organizational performance review findings and employee feedback to improve their own leadership effectiveness, the effectiveness of management throughout the organization including the head of the organization, and the governance board/policy making body? How do their personal actions reflect a commitment to organizational values?

The Chairman of the Commission communicates on an on-going basis with Agency leadership. Organizational performance is reported and discussed at quarterly Commission meetings.

Senior leaders discuss and use employee feedback and organizational reviews to determine if leadership/management:

- adequately communicates direction and priorities to employees
- identifies and removes barriers that may hinder employees' performance
- sets realistic performance expectations
- should modify or change priorities

Agency leadership maintains an open door approach to business with employees, customers, and stakeholders, participates in the physical fitness work capacity tests with employees, and continues to support additional employee recognition efforts.

1.7 How do senior leaders promote and personally participate in succession planning and the development of future organizational leaders?

The agency director conducts meetings with senior leadership to devise and implement strategies for succession planning and to identify opportunities for developing future leaders. Leadership continues to review and discuss the status of these efforts and identify additional needs/opportunities on a regular basis.

1.8 How do senior leaders create an environment for performance improvement and the accomplishment of strategic objectives?

Input for update of the strategic plan was sought from employees at all levels of the organization. Major goals and objectives and their status are discussed at staff meetings and input for performance improvement and innovation is encouraged through various employee councils and program personnel. Committees are charged with identifying opportunities for improvement.

1.9 How do senior leaders create an environment for organizational and workforce learning?

An environment for organizational and workforce learning is created by selecting individuals to participate in the Certified Public Manager Program. Projects completed within the program are evaluated, considered, and implemented where feasible. Individuals have also previously participated in the Executive Institute and the Associate Public Manager Program. SCFC supports our personnel by assisting them with memberships in professional organizations, registration fees and related expenses for attending relevant conferences. A Tuition Assistance Policy and Procedure is also in place whereby employees can request assistance for work related courses.

1.10 How do senior leaders communicate with, engage, empower, and motivate the entire workforce throughout the organization? How do senior leaders take an active role in reward and recognition processes to reinforce high performance throughout the organization?

A weekly newsletter is distributed to all personnel. The Agency Director submits an opening article each week to communicate his activities and current forestry issues.

Senior leaders also participate in regional meetings with staff and other key partners.

Senior leaders actively participate in recognition ceremonies for employee service and retirements. They also attend the graduations for employees' major milestones such as completion of the Law Enforcement Training and Certified Public Manager Program. Senior leaders also make special efforts to recognize employees upon receipt of letters acknowledging a customer's appreciation for the services delivered.

1.11 How do senior leaders actively support and strengthen the communities in which your organization operates? Include how senior leaders determine areas of emphasis for organizational involvement and support, and how senior leaders, the workforce, and the organization contribute to improving these communities.

Senior leaders actively support and strengthen communities by supporting employee participation in professional and community organizations and associations, with emphasis on encouraging employees to monitor forestry issues at the local level as addressed in our Strategic Plan under Raise the Awareness. The agency also supports local school districts in which state forests are located by returning 25% of the gross receipts generated from the sale of forest products on each forest to the district (Graph 7.3-8). SCFC employees routinely provide advice and assistance, as well as training and grant opportunities to communities, organizations, and local governments, especially through the agency's Urban and Community Forestry Program, cooperation with rural and volunteer fire departments, and reforestation efforts. Employees' community involvement includes participation in and support of local fire, law enforcement, and forestry associations; participation in the United Way, Red Cross & Blood Connection blood drives, various walk & bike-a-thons, Good Health Appeal, Special Olympics, Palmetto Pride, fishing rodeos for youth, state forests and state park events, as well as festivals in towns, cities, and communities.

CATEGORY 2 - STRATEGIC PLANNING

2.1 What is your Strategic Planning process, including key participants, and how does it address:

The agency's strategic plan is the basis for short term, mid term and long term planning. Over the last 10 years the agency's strategic plan has been revised three times with the most recent revision completed in June 2006. The revision process took place over several months involving the collection of input and data from agency Commissioners, employees, customers, cooperators, and the public. Information/data was analyzed and its content verified, like issues consolidated, strategies identified, the plan developed and disseminated, with reviews and monitoring occurring as the plan is carried out.

2.1a Organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats:

Through the SWOT portion of the strategic plan process we continue to keep focused on our customers and stakeholders. Doing this helps us to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats that could impact our goals and actions.

2.1b Financial, regulatory, societal and other potential risks:

Specific financial, regulatory, societal, or other risks are addressed in individual action items in the strategic plan. This includes reviewing the agency's financial and staffing levels and needs.

2.1c Shifts in technology, regulatory, societal and other potential risks, and customer preferences:

The SCFC evaluates staffing, equipment, and technology to ensure adequate response to all wildfires, forest health issues, and other activities and events within the scope of the SCFC's mission. Wildland Urban Interface initiatives, Wildfire Prevention teams, and Incident Management teams are designed to address societal and potential risks to our natural resources and the citizens of South Carolina. When forest health risks are identified appropriate measures are taken to inform customers. Customer satisfaction surveys assist in determining the opinions and needs of our customers and their preferences.

2.1d Workforce capabilities and needs:

The strategic plan reflects the agency's intent to plan effectively for the use of human resources, with a strong emphasis on training and safety for firefighters and foresters. In response to ongoing budget concerns and to initiate systematic planning for vacancies created by retirement, the SCFC reviewed its structure, programs, and staffing levels, and reorganized and realigned the workforce. Efforts continue to develop a stronger cross-functional workforce in the performance of forest protection and management services through the development of Incident Management Teams and Emergency Response Teams. Succession planning strategies continue to be utilized to minimize knowledge loss through attrition.

2.1e Organizational continuity in emergencies.

The SCFC is a primary point of contact for 9-1-1 centers, fire departments and the public. SCFC statewide dispatch operations will be kept current with technology, equipment, and staffing to support the agency's fire dispatch, smoke management and emergency communications roles. There is an increased emphasis on training SCFC personnel and cooperators in the Incident Command System (ICS) and general wildfire suppression tactics. An agency Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) working draft has been developed in an effort to ensure continuity of essential functions in the event of a disaster. Part of this framework is based on the Southern Group of State Foresters Disaster Response

Handbook. The agency cooperates with the SCEMD, fire departments, and other emergency response organizations. The SCFC seeks out opportunities to train and utilize private and/or non-traditional cooperators.

2.1f *Your ability to execute the strategic plan.*

Our efforts have been focused on linking employees' position descriptions and evaluations to the strategic plan. This enables us to provide for an effective way to execute our strategic plan as well as conform to the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria. Targeted goals and action items have been selected as performance objectives for employees in the line organization.

2.2 *How do your strategic objectives address the strategic challenges you identified in your Executive Summary?*

Our strategic objectives lead us toward solutions for the strategic challenges that we have identified. These challenges are closely aligned with our primary strategic plan goals of protecting the resource and raising awareness of forestry issues and the agency's role in addressing those issues.

2.3 *How do you develop and track action plans that address your key strategic objectives, and how do you allocate resources to ensure the accomplishment of your action plans?*

Action items are identified for each goal in the strategic plan and are included in the plan. Agency leaders and program managers further identified steps needed to achieve the action items and the personnel involved. These action items have been included within the Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) and specific employees' planning stages, with managers and supervisors responsible for tracking progress. The action items are tied to performance measures. In addition, the Plans and Support staff are dedicated to monitoring and reporting on action items toward strategic goals and objectives. This information is reported to the Commissioners, State Forester, Deputy State Forester, and employees on a quarterly basis.

2.4 *How do you communicate and deploy your strategic objectives, action plans and related performance measures?*

The agency's strategic plan is published on the SCFC website (see 2.7). All managers review and update strategic plan action items each year when performance appraisals are due. Employees are reminded of objectives, review performance measures, and discuss new action plans to improve performance measures with supervisors at that time. Employees are aware of the progress being made on performance measures via e-mail and on a weekly, monthly and quarterly basis.

2.5 *How do you measure progress on your action plans?*

Since the action items are used to determine the agency's goals and are incorporated into our daily activities, the measure of them is reflected in the measures which have been developed for this accountability report. Graph 7.1-7, which measures compliance with BMPs, relates directly to *Protect the Resource – Goal Five – Action Item 5* in our strategic plan which states: "Continue BMP monitoring to document success and provide opportunities for education of landowners, loggers, and forestry professionals."

Accomplishments on action plans are tracked each month and compiled into a quarterly report which is presented to the executive staff and the Commissioners at each scheduled Commission meeting.

2.6 *How do you evaluate and improve your strategic planning process?*

The Commissioners, State Forester, Deputy State Forester, and the executive team monitor existing initiatives on a quarterly basis and identify potential new initiatives for action. The initiatives are then translated into objectives and success criteria for relevant program areas and employees.

2.7 *If the agency's strategic plan is available to the public through the agency's Internet homepage, please provide a website address for that plan.*

The web address for the agency's strategic plan is www.trees.sc.gov/stratplan.pdf

2.8 Strategic Planning Chart:**Strategic Planning**

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 07-08 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures*
II Forest Landowners Assistance Protection	Protect the resource	Ensure prompt and effective response to wildfire and other natural disasters Re-evaluate protection strategies, priorities, capabilities as urban areas expand into woodlands Lead in law enforcement in wildfire and timber theft and fraud investigation Ensure prompt response to insect and disease outbreaks Enhance water quality protection	7.1-3, 7.1-4, 7.3-7 7.1-3 7.1-5, 7.1-6 7.1-8 7.1-7
II Forest Landowners Assistance Forest Mgt. IV Education	Raise awareness about the resource	Develop and promote forestry education programs for all audiences Enhance the image of SCFC as source for forest management information and assistance	7.1-9a, 7.1-9b, 7.1-10
II Forest Landowners Assistance Forest Mgt. III State Forests IV Education	Manage the resource	Provide improved land management services to all SC landowners Provide technical, financial educational assistance in urban forestry Use landholdings to demonstrate management techniques	7.2-2, 7.2-3, 7.5-1 7.1-11
II Forest Landowners Assistance Forest Mgt. III State Forests IV Education	Enhance the Resource	Serve as catalyst for promotion, development, expansion of forest resource and markets in SC Provide timely information on forest inventory and health Provide landowners with optimum quality seedlings	7.1-1a, 7.1-1b 7.1-2 7.2-1
I Admin. II Forest Landowners Assistance Forest Mgt. III State Forests IV Education	Prepare to meet future demands	Maintain a capable, satisfied, diverse work team Enhance professional development for all agency staff Review staffing levels and organizational structure to ensure continued forestry services Reduce job-related injuries	7.4-1 7.4-2

*Key Cross-References are a link to the Category 7 – Results. These References provide a Chart number that is included in the 7th section of this document.

CATEGORY 3 – CUSTOMER AND MARKET FOCUS

3.1 How do you determine who your customers are and what their key requirements are?

Our key customers were generally identified in the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 48-23-90 *General Duties of Commission*. As our services and products have evolved over the years our customer base has expanded to include other non-traditional forestry customers. For example, urban populations have expanded into the more rural and forested areas of our state and we are responding to this population's need for assistance on their personal property, as well as providing information on their surrounding natural environment.

Our agency uses a variety of methods to determine requirements, expectations, preferences and satisfaction of customers and stakeholders:

- Customer Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Public Forums and Workshops
- Collaboration with Partners and User Groups
- Outreach Publications for Targeted Audiences
- Interviews
- County Forestry Board Meetings
- Monitoring of Legislative Activities
- Homeowner Association Meetings
- Forest Landowner Association Meetings

The SCFC has conducted surveys of customers to determine their expectations and preferences. Survey forms soliciting feedback are sent to landowners that receive forest management assistance or services. Customers are asked about the length of time it took to complete the service, the results of the service, follow-up on the service, and courtesy and professionalism of the employees.

Each year, agency leadership also participates in meetings of county forestry boards to discuss current forestry issues and agency programs.

Federal grants dictate to whom we provide assistance in Community Forestry, Best Management Practices, and the Wildland/Urban Interface programs.

Periodic mailings, such as surveys to new forest landowners, help the agency acquire new customers and determine their interests and needs.

3.2 How do you keep your listening and learning methods current with changing customer/business needs and expectations?

The SCFC seeks input and information through customer surveys and employee feedback, as well as through participation in a number of partnerships and councils, to determine changing customer/business needs and expectations. These include: SC State Government Improvement Network, Urban and Community Forestry Council, SC Statewide Outreach Council, Wildland Fire Protection Partnership, the Prescribed Fire Council, South Carolina Foresters Council, SGSF, NASF, SCEMD, SFM Division, SCFA, many local landowner

associations, professional organizations, Firewise Community Homeowner Associations and the South Carolina Firemen's Association.

3.3 *What are your key customer access mechanisms, and how do these access mechanisms enable customers to seek information, conduct business, and make complaints?*

Key customer access mechanisms include telephone (landline and cell), mail and fax to SCFC offices (county, unit, region, headquarters and dispatch); personal contact at public meetings, forums, workshops, and individual meetings; internet (website and email) and customer satisfaction surveys. The agency's dispatch centers and statewide 1-800-777-FIRE (3473) number provide customers with 24/7 access to the Forestry Commission for reporting wildfires, burn notifications, smoke complaints and other requests for assistance. An automated system for handling over 400,000 vegetative yard debris notifications per year provides an efficient and consistent message on current fire danger and requirements to conduct an outdoor burn safely. The agency also maintains a web site that is constantly updated to provide an online source for forestry information, point of contacts, and services. In FY 2008, we also implemented online permit sales. All of these mechanisms allow customers to obtain information, conduct business and make complaints either verbally or in writing.

Requested information can be mailed, faxed, emailed and/or delivered in person to the customer. Other government agencies (i.e. SCDNR, Clemson Extension, NRCS, Farm Service Agency, USDA Forest Service, Counties, etc) have and provide information about SCFC services, programs, and contact information to customers.

3.4 *How do you measure customer/stakeholder satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and use this information to improve?*

Customer satisfaction surveys regarding forest management plans, stewardship management plans, forest services, and forest tree seedlings are provided to customers to fill out and return in self-addressed postage paid envelopes. Survey information since 1998 is available for forest seedling customers (Graph 7.2-1); since 1999 for services (Graph 7.2-2) and management plans (Graph 7.2-3). Results from these surveys are reviewed to determine if there are areas that can be improved. SCFC personnel respond to all specific customer complaints on an individual basis.

3.5 *How do you use information and feedback from customers/stakeholders to keep services and programs relevant and provide for continuous improvement?*

Input is reviewed by program managers and agency leaders and evaluated to ensure that services and programs in five key areas (forest protection, forest management, state forests, seedling production, and forestry education) are not only relevant to the current needs of customers/stakeholders but also to our mission and strategic goals. Positive services and programs are continued and those less effective are improved or eliminated. This information is also used to identify new services and programs needed.

3.6 *How do you build positive relationships with customers and stakeholders? Indicate any key distinctions between different customer and stakeholder groups.*

Complaints are recorded and promptly investigated to determine where problems exist and efforts made to resolve them quickly.

The SCFC meets with state forest user groups on a timely basis to discuss and plan for future recreational opportunities on Forestry Commission owned land.

The SCFC makes timely responses to elected officials seeking input.

The SCFC's Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Program reaches out to community planners and developers, residents and business owners in the state's expanding wildland urban interfaces. WUI is a hazard mitigation and education program designed to help these customers reduce the risks of wildfire in their communities and to protect lives and property.

The SCFC reaches educators, young people, and other interested citizens with exhibits and interpretive signage on Harbison State Forest. The agency cooperates with other natural resources agencies and organizations as well as forest industry to provide two popular forestry education programs. The Wood Magic Forest Fair is an award-winning, weeklong program on the benefits of forests and forestry offered to 4th grade classes statewide. The SC Teacher's Tour is offered for graduate credit during the summer. (Graph 7.1-10)

CATEGORY 4 – MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

4.1 How do you decide which operations, processes and systems to measure for tracking financial and operational performance, including progress relative to strategic objectives and action plans?

Historically, measures have been used to monitor program accomplishments based on the primary mission and funding sources. The SCFC is actively shifting its key measures from a focus on activity levels to developing performance measures that are linked to the mission of the organization and the objectives of the strategic plan. Recently, new measures have been developed based on their importance to the overall success of our agency. The SCFC has continued to strengthen its focus on improving efficiency, effectiveness, quality, and outcome measures. Also, the SCFC has defined our key customer groups and related key requirements. The use of a variety of approaches to listen and learn from our customers provides opportunities for process improvements.

We continue to design measures linked directly to our mission and the objectives outlined in our strategic plan. Senior management seeks to find measures that track our progress in achieving strategic objectives and implementing action plans. The SCFC has a strategic planning process in place that includes active participation by senior management, a comprehensive SWOT analysis that includes a variety of customers and stakeholders from throughout the state, and employee input.

4.2 How do you select, collect, align, and integrate data/information for analysis to provide effective support for decision making and innovation throughout your organization?

New data/information is reviewed to determine accuracy and relevance to our strategic goals. Data and/or information which meet these criteria are utilized to encourage the continuation of positive processes and to improve less effective aspects of our operations.

We also conduct cost/benefit analysis on new technology as it becomes available and relevant to our organization. The SGSF has sponsored Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment and Forest Assessment projects. These Geographic Information System (GIS) based assessments will facilitate strategic decisions related to the prioritization of services and delivery of them in key program areas such as Wildfire Prevention Teams and Forest Stewardship Management Plans.

4.3 What are your key measures, how do you review them, and how do you keep them current with organizational service needs and directions?

During FY 2008, we revised our process regarding Customer Satisfaction Surveys. Beginning in December 2007 customers were directed to return their surveys to our Department of Plans and Support where they could be reviewed, analyzed, and summarized on a statewide basis by a disinterested party and opportunities for improvement identified and addressed.

By going to a centralized process, opportunities for improvement have been identified. For FY 2009, the surveys have been minimally revised and color coded by region to aid in tracking data. The process by which they are distributed has also been revised in an effort

to stream-line the process and increase our response rates. The process was changed so the Forest Management and Stewardship Surveys would be distributed consistently from the regional offices and managed by one employee within.

Implementation of BMP measures is constantly being monitored with field inspections by the Environmental Management Section to insure that a high level of compliance is being maintained.

Wildland fire occurrence and suppression efforts are reviewed monthly to track trends for the current year.

Additional measures are collected and analyzed annually to be used in our mid- to long-range planning.

Enhance the Resource

- Forest-Based Economic Development Impact (Graphs 7.1-1a&b)
- Forest Inventory and Analysis Plot Production (Graph 7.1-2)

Protect the Resource

- Average Fire Response Time in Minutes (Graph 7.1-3)
- Ten Year Average Fire Size for Southern States (Graph 7.1-4)
- Timber Theft and Fraud Cases Settled (Graph 7.1-5)
- Five Year Occurrence, Extended Investigations, and Prosecutions (Graph 7.1-6)
- Red-cockaded Woodpecker (Graph 7.1-11)
- BMP Harvesting Compliance Trends (Graph 7.1-7)
- SPB Losses in SC (Graph 7.1-8)

Raise Awareness about the Resource

- Participation and Demand for Wood Magic (Graph 7.1-9a)
- Participation and Demand for SC Teachers Tour (Graph 7.1-10)

Customer Satisfaction

- Customer Satisfaction Level for Seedling Products (Graph 7.2-1)
- Customer Satisfaction with Forestry Services (Graph 7.2-2)
- Customer Satisfaction with Forest Management Plans (Graph 7.2-3)

Financial

- Appropriations – State General Funds (Graph 7.3-1)
- Voucher Transactions as a Result of Visa Card Usage (Graph 7.3-2)
- Agency Fuel Costs (Graph 7.3-3)
- Federal Grants (Graph 7.3-4)
- Declining Purchasing Power (Graph 7.3-5)
- 1-800 Charges per 10,000 Calls Received (Graph 7.3-7)
- State Forest Payments to the Counties (Graph 7.3-8)

Employee Satisfaction, Involvement, and Development

- Employee Turnover Rate (Graph 7.4-1)
- Physical Fitness Program Participation (Graph 7.4-2)

Regulatory/Legal Compliance

- Smoke Management Notifications, Number and Average Call Length (Graphs 7.5-1 & 7.5-2))

4.4 *How do you select and use key comparative data and information to support operational and strategic decision making and innovation?*

During joint meetings with program managers from other forestry agencies in southeastern states common issues are discussed. Comparative data from similar state forestry organizations is available on a limited basis and each state records data differently. However, we strive to get the best comparative data available. Contacts made with southeastern states reveal that most state forestry organizations are just beginning to track meaningful performance measures. South Carolina is the only southeastern state which tracks dispatch response times through a statewide real time CADS. The SGSF has adopted the moderate level work capacity test as the standard to measure wildland firefighter physical fitness.

Trips to other states and phone surveys have been used to collect information about operational decisions in other forestry agencies. Consultation with our stakeholders and partners is used to gain insight for improving our agency.

4.5 *How do you ensure data integrity, timeliness, accuracy, security and availability for decision making?*

Measures and data have been used during program reviews at the area/unit and state levels. Senior management has instructed regional foresters and division directors to begin sharing performance data with personnel at all levels as a means of improving processes and generating feedback.

Our CADS has been updated to streamline our internal dispatch processes to improve our service to the public. The updates have positively affected our data collection and thus have improved our data analysis and process improvement efforts. The overall management goal with the ongoing feature changes with the CADS is to produce improved outputs with the overall system. The SCFC Dispatch Management Team and the Regional Foresters constantly review and analyze the data outputs associated with dispatch and initial attack response in the field to ensure correctness of figures.

Within our forest management programs we have begun development of a new enterprise geodatabase to facilitate data collection and analysis. Once operational, this system will consolidate data collection for several programs and facilitate tracking and reporting of outcomes for new federal and state reporting systems.

We undergo annual audits of financial records and processes. Our Internal Auditor reviews and analyzes data collection processes on an ongoing basis.

4.6 *How do you translate organizational performance review findings into priorities for continuous improvement?*

The SCFC has outside reviews conducted by state and federal entities. Almost each fiscal year, the SCFC is required to go through some type of review of its forest management and

fire management programs. Most recently, at the SGSF Annual Meeting in Columbia, SC this past June, the SCFC used the various program meetings as opportunities to benchmark with other state forestry agencies to enhance continuous improvement with their forest and fire management programs. Also, other items benchmarked during these sessions were: strategic plans, customer satisfaction surveys, and accountability reports. Improvements recommended by these reviews are studied to determine cost/benefit ratios, feasibility of implementation, and effectiveness. The SCFC regards all reviews as opportunities to improve our overall operations.

4.7 How do you collect, transfer, and maintain organizational and employee knowledge (knowledge assets)? How do you identify and share best practices?

The SCFC has a state of the art Computed Aided Dispatch System that captures a tremendous amount of data about our daily operations. In addition, we utilize customer surveys, monthly staff meetings, and work teams to brainstorm solutions to challenges facing us. We share this information using communication tools such as an annual report and a weekly bulletin, which is distributed to every employee. Critical positions, occupied by personnel with known retirement dates, are targeted for early hiring of replacements to facilitate transfer of knowledge.

In FY 2009 we will initiate unit level reviews of Forest Protection and Forest Management activities and service delivery. Results of these reviews will be used to identify and share best practices and other opportunities for improvement.

CATEGORY 5 – WORKFORCE FOCUS

5.1 How does management organize and measure work to enable your workforce to 1) develop to their full potential, aligned with the organization's objectives, strategies, and action plans; and 2) promote cooperation, initiative, empowerment, teamwork, innovation and your organizational culture?

The mission of the organization is based on the South Carolina Forest Fire Protection Act, which states the State Commission of Forestry shall direct forest fire protection work. The Commissioners and senior managers, including regional foresters and program managers, define the strategic goals and objectives to accomplish this responsibility. Unit foresters, state forest directors, and supervisors develop action plans. Division and department employees complete the tasks. Professional development seminars covering diversity, ethics, and hiring practices are provided to aid our employees in fulfilling their supervisory responsibilities.

Forest protection and management activities are accomplished through agency regions, which are further subdivided into units. The regions include Piedmont, Pee Dee and Coastal. The regions have common goals and objectives, and the implementation is handled within the regions taking into account geographical concerns and other considerations. The specific implementation tasks are developed for each unit by the unit forester, supervisor, specialty foresters (BMP, Stewardship, Urban, and FIA) and other employee input. The state forest system, which is comprised of 5 locations, also establishes specific action plans. Employee involvement at all levels increases the commitment to the agency's mission and goals.

Several agency activities are accomplished through the use of teams. For example, IMTs, fire review teams, accountability report, and interview and selection teams. The use of teams allows collaboration and cooperation among work units. In addition, the teams allow for knowledge sharing and employee empowerment and input toward the agency's goals and objectives. The nature of the work requirements of foresters and firefighters requires them to make decisions on the front line. Therefore, employee empowerment is built into their assigned responsibilities. For example, when dealing with a forest fire, the employee must assess and make decisions based on the situation at hand. In addition, on a regular basis, the agency's Best Management Practices (BMP) foresters are authorized to make assessments concerning logging sites that could result in the site ceasing to operate. The agency emphasizes extensive training in order for employees to appropriately respond to situations at hand.

The structure of the organization encourages and requires cooperation among divisions and departments to accomplish the mission of the agency. There is great cooperation among departments, particularly with forest fire activities. Employees whose normal day to day activities may involve forest management are fire line qualified and available to assist with fire control when necessary. The agency's dispatch centers, which are critical to the fire management division, continually utilize technology to assist the staff in accomplishing tasks and assessing the results. For example, the CADS provides information on response times, acres burned, and initial responder. Also, the agency recently started using a computer smoke management model to assist fire managers in assessing potential areas where the public could be affected by drifting smoke.

Employees' input and involvement are encouraged locally, regionally and nationally. Employees make presentations to civic organizations and local government, and they represent the SCFC on committees. Since the agency's core competency is forest fire management, employees have opportunities to serve on external teams with other law enforcement and protection agencies as subject matter experts.

5.2 *How do you achieve effective communication and knowledge/skill/best practice sharing across departments, jobs, and locations?*

Communication within the agency occurs daily with an intranet morning report, which indicates employees who are out of the office for the day or traveling. This e-mail is distributed to approximately 70% of the workforce. A weekly bulletin is distributed to all employees either by e-mail or regular mail. The bulletin captures department updates, highlights of agency information, or employees, agency history, etc. Employee meetings are scheduled on a monthly basis with approximately 40% of the workforce. The monthly meetings are held with program and department managers by the senior management of the agency. The agenda for the meeting includes program updates, changes, problems and lessons learned. The information is then communicated with respective employee groups or departments. The firefighters hold monthly meetings to exchange administrative information and any job specific discussions. In addition, specific programs or departments have regularly scheduled meetings on a quarterly basis. In addition to meetings, portable radios, pagers, cell phones and dispatch calls/messages are communication methods utilized.

Some specific formal methods of knowledge/skills/best practice sharing include fire reviews, training and safety council, and program manager meetings. In addition, several employees are used as instructors for established training programs. Employees, who are Certified Public Manager participants, share project information results.

5.3 *How does management recruit, hire, place, and retain new employees? Describe any barriers that you may encounter.*

State government implemented an electronic recruitment program September 2007. The agency utilizes the system as its main recruitment source. It is an internet based system and therefore is able to reach a broad and diverse applicant pool. In addition to the electronic recruitment system, newspaper advertisement in rural areas and forestry journals/bulletins are used for some positions. Recruitment barriers the agency faces include minority recruitment, decline of forestry graduates, and competitive salaries particularly for foresters and firefighters. The agency also participates in school and community career fairs. The agency utilizes individual and group interview methods during the recruitment and selection process. A candidate may interview for a specific location or several locations depending on position. In order to assist employees with making changes on their records (i.e. address, withholding request), interactive forms are on the agency's intranet which employees can access at a convenient time to complete. The agency's policies and procedures manual is easily accessible through the intranet also. During the fiscal year, the agency evaluated and piloted sending detailed benefit and resource sites to new hires to review prior to their start date in order to help answer questions and prepare them for their orientation process. The agency's retention of employees remains higher than the state's average. The agency's workforce is given

discretion and flexibility within established guidelines and goals to achieve their job functions.

5.4 *How do you assess your workforce capability and capacity needs, including skills, competencies, and staffing levels?*

Methods to determine workforce capability include observation, interviews between management and employee, exit interviews, group meetings, review of data and reports, evaluation and response to perceived problems, and post training tests. Most of the methods are used with all groups of employees; however, the testing method is primarily used with the forestry technician training program. Capacity needs are determined based on evaluations of data related to forest protection and forest management such as number of fires, response times, management plans completed versus number of requests. The evaluation is completed by senior managers, regional and program managers.

SCFC has participated in state government surveys on Information Technology (IT) skills and needs assessments. IT staff is kept informed of training opportunities in related technology that are being offered through state contracts, by technical colleges, software companies, and IT training vendors. Outside consultants or interns are utilized for specialized short term skill, competencies, and staffing needs.

5.5 *How does your workforce performance management system, including feedback to and from individual members of the workforce, support high performance work and contribute to the achievement of your action plans?*

Employee performance is assessed and evaluated using the Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) designed for SC state government agencies. The system is designed to be a continuous process. The three components of the system include planning stage, on-going communication, and evaluation stage. Upon hire or job classification change, a planning document is prepared which involves reviewing the employee's position description and establishing performance goals for the upcoming evaluation period. The success criteria established for the performance goals are stated in measurable terms. Additional objectives may also be established for the employee to complete during the evaluation period.

There should be ongoing communication between the employee and the manager concerning performance expectations. The system encourages communication between the employee and supervisor. The goals are established jointly and there is interim follow-up on progress during the year. The evaluation and appraisal interview are the main components of the yearly review process. The level of the employee's performance is evaluated as below, meets, exceeds or substantially exceeds on the previously established performance goals. The EPMS is deployed throughout the agency. The agency incorporates a universal review date for all employees with at least one year of service with the agency. The universal review date assists managers and supervisors with establishing annual goals for all employees on a consistent timeframe.

Managers and supervisors, along with input from the employee, establish the success criteria for performance. Some criteria are established based on policy, or they may be deadline driven. The agency continues to work on aligning individual employee's performance success criteria to stated strategic objectives. For example, one goal outlined

in the agency's strategic plan is to improve contacts and communication with state and local levels of government concerning forestry related issues. The action item to accomplish this goal is to increase participation in public hearings, including county council and planning commission meetings. A standard operating practice to ensure this item is implemented is to submit a report from the specific meeting attended. The agency follows up with any forestry related issues on the agenda. Thus far, components of the following job groups' EPMS are directly linked to strategic objectives: regional foresters, assistant regional foresters, unit foresters, project foresters, warden technicians, law enforcement, and firefighting supervisors. The requirement of a reviewer in the supervisor's chain of command, to review the employee's final evaluation assists in assuring deployment of success criteria linked to strategic plan items.

5.6 *How does your development and learning system for leaders address the following:*

a. development of personal leadership attributes

b. development of organizational knowledge

c. ethical practices

d. your core competencies, strategic challenges, and accomplishment of action plans

The senior leadership for the agency has participated in the South Carolina Executive Institute. The Executive Institute is for senior government officials in South Carolina seeking to sharpen their leadership and management abilities. Sessions deal with decision making at the policy level and are designed to strengthen specific management skills and techniques. The South Carolina Executive Institute is not funded for the upcoming fiscal year. The agency will review other developmental and training programs which may offer similar skills.

The agency hired a new director, Henry E. Kodama, during the fiscal year. He has been involved with orientation to state government systems and processes, developing and building relationships with agency partners, stakeholders and customers. The agency director and deputy director participate with the agency director organization programs and SC Human Affairs programs that cover the importance of senior leadership and support for programs the agency may be implementing.

A key component of our development and learning system for leaders is a genuine understanding of the concept of leading by example, and the senior leaders strive to provide guidance, make decisions, and represent the agency according to the SCFC values. Employees of the agency carry out their responsibilities according to the ethical standards of their individual professions (i.e. forestry, accounting, human resources.)

Core competencies, strategic challenges and accomplishments of action plans are addressed on a monthly and quarterly basis to educate agency leaders.

5.7 *How do you identify and address key developmental training needs for your workforce, including job skills training, performance excellence training, diversity training, management/leadership development, new employee orientation and safety training?*

Program managers are asked to recommend changes to ongoing training programs and to identify new training needed. The SCFC's training council developed training guides to set minimum training requirements for each position. The council meets periodically to review changes or additions to training needs. The SCFC implements national wildfire training standards and courses which are frequently updated. The Training Director schedules necessary training and maintains a database for each employee indicating training completed.

Hiring Practices training is provided to all supervisors each year to ensure affirmative action policies are followed. All supervisory personnel are required to complete the Supervisory Practices course offered by Office of Human Resources (OHR). Leadership development is encouraged by identifying and inviting key employees to participate in the Certified Public Manager program and Executive Institute. Professional Development workshops for all supervisors and program managers were conducted to improve skills in working with citizens and local government leaders.

Training guides for new employees are completed to ensure that all agency and safety policies are understood and followed. All equipment operators must complete 'Fire Suppression Equipment Operator Essential Task Orientation' within 30 days of employment. Effectiveness of Wildland Firefighting, Incident Management, First Aid/CPR, Forest Technician, and other courses is evaluated by testing.

Familiarity with new technology helps an employee complete his or her work more efficiently. Some technical coursework is mandated in order to meet Federal requirements (such as GIS mapping). The Deputy State Forester makes expectations clear to supervisors about training that is required to develop new skills. Expectations are included on employees' EPMS.

5.8 *How do you encourage on the job use of new knowledge and skills?*

The agency recognizes the importance of development and training of its workforce. The agency awards salary increases for forestry registration, completion of the forestry technician program, progression through established career paths (i.e. foresters, dispatchers, and mechanics) and criminal justice academy graduation. Experienced employees are often used as instructors for the forestry technician program, community educational programs, and agency representatives on state and regional committees. The agency has established IMTs and employees are encouraged to participate. While many of the positions on the teams are for employees with forestry and wildfire background, there are available positions for administrative staff. Participation on the teams provides opportunities for employees to increase their skills and knowledge outside of normal day to day responsibilities and allows development of leadership skills.

5.9 *How does employee training contribute to the achievement of your action plans?*

Employee training will allow the SCFC to meet future demands and provide quality service with well-trained, qualified staff that enjoys a safe and rewarding work environment. Our main achievements would be:

- Maintain a capable, satisfied and diverse work team.

- Enhance professional development for agency personnel to efficiently, safely, and professionally provide better services.
- Review staffing levels and organizational structure to ensure the agency is in a position to supply needed services.
- Implement plans and establish performance measures to reduce the number of job-related injuries.
- Establish goals and implement vehicle and equipment operations safety training to reduce the number of accidents.

5.10 How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your workforce and leader training and development systems?

Indicators of the effectiveness of training include application on the job and successful mock exercises. The agency's forestry technician training program is a combination of classroom and field work. The classroom training is tested and the skills are applied by completing field work under supervision. The comprehensive training program takes approximately 2 years to complete. The duration allows employees to experience real time fire and forest management situations discussed and simulated during training. The agency has established incident management teams. There have been numerous classroom training hours and exercises for these teams. The skills developed were utilized to plan the SGSF's Annual Meeting. The meeting was successful with positive feedback from participants concerning the logistics.

Employees who have completed Certified Public Management and Executive Institute programs and are successfully handling additional responsibilities for the agency is an indicator of the effectiveness of developmental skills taught in the respective programs. In addition, employees completing job specific training (i.e. Excel) are evaluated based on improved performance. Employee accidents and incidents are reviewed to determine if safety training procedures were followed and if supplemental training is needed.

5.11 How do you motivate your workforce to develop and utilize their full potential?

The agency utilizes the following tools and mechanisms to assist with motivating employees to develop and utilize their full potential:

- Service Award Presentations for 10, 20, 30 and 40 years of state service;
- Agency Service Awards for 5, 15, 25, 35 and 45 years of service;
- Public Service Recognition Week acknowledgement with lunch or gift;
- Recognition of accomplishment and achievements in the Weekly News Bulletin;
- Career path development defined by agency structure or specific job groups;
- Recognition and compensation increase for Forester Registration;
- Tuition assistance for course work related to job responsibilities;
- Flexible work schedules allow employees opportunities to balance professional and personal responsibilities;
- Successful completion of specific training courses provides opportunities for out of state fire detail and selection on incident management teams;
- Performance increases and bonuses for work performance or task completion which has a significant impact on the agency;

- Manager discussion with employees on career goals;
- Periodically individuals have represented senior management at designated meetings, which leads to professional development.

The tools and mechanisms provide a means for the agency to recognize employee milestones related to service time, professional growth and individual development. The agency recognizes and shows appreciation to the employees for their contributions. The recognition of accomplishments also provides an opportunity for other employees to learn from their coworkers and to share professional knowledge.

5.12 *What formal and/or informal assessment methods and measures do you use to obtain information on workforce well-being, satisfaction, and motivation? How do you use other measures such as employee retention and grievances? How do you use this information?*

Some of the assessment methods and measures the agency uses as indicators to determine employee well-being, satisfaction, and motivation include: lunches with the State Forester; exit interview information; follow up with managers and employees; open door policy; flexible work schedules; employee assistance program; career path development; workers compensation claims; and tuition assistance program. The feedback received from these methods and measures is used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of processes and procedures. The information received from the assessment methods and measures is used to evaluate what the agency is doing right or where improvements are needed. Employee input is greatly valued and modifications or establishment of processes or procedures are considered based on their input.

Employee retention and grievance rates are used as indicators for employee satisfaction and motivation. The information from retention rate analysis is used as a knowledge sharing opportunity or improvement with the orientation program. Employees remaining with the agency have acquired knowledge, which can be shared with new employees or internal and external teams or partners. Information from grievances filed is used to improve applicable processes and communication with employees. The types and number of workers compensation claims filed are used to determine training needs or refreshers needed.

Information obtained from all methods and measures is carefully reviewed and analyzed. Priorities for improvement are determined based on meeting the agency's mission, employee well-being, and available budget. The agency recognizes the importance of employee well-being, satisfaction, and motivation with successful accomplishment of goals and objectives.

5.13 *How do you manage effective career progression and effective succession planning for your entire workforce throughout the organization?*

The agency has evaluated the current workforce to determine staff that meets eligibility requirements to retire over the next five years. The analysis indicated approximately 30% of the workforce meet or will meet retirement eligibility within the next five years. The analysis also details individuals by location and supervisor and therefore assists in areas of concentration for preparing employees and the agency for the potential changes. The agency fills positions early on planned departures, when possible, to allow the newly

selected individual to work with the outgoing employee to facilitate a smooth transition. The agency utilizes temporary job assignments to fulfill current needs but also as a method to broaden employees experience and prepare for other responsibilities. The agency will evaluate job rotations as a method to prepare employees for future vacancies.

5.14 How do you maintain a safe, secure, and healthy work environment? (Include your workplace preparedness for emergencies and disasters.)

The SCFC stresses safety throughout its training and operations. The training program for many employees includes First Aid/CPR, Driver Improvement, and an annual refresher for fire line employees on the use of a fire shelter.

The SCFC requires wildland firefighters to participate and encourages voluntary participation in the Physical Fitness Program. Incentives to complete the physical fitness test are provided. More information on the Physical Fitness Program is in Section 7.4. The SCFC puts an emphasis on personal safety and has policies and procedures on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and safe fireline procedures. Employees are encouraged to participate in health screenings and health fairs.

The Safety Coordinator reviews all accidents and injuries to look for developing trends and to make recommendations to reduce future problems. He performs an annual inspection of agency facilities to ensure that Occupational Safety Health Association (OSHA) and state regulations are followed. An evacuation plan has been developed for each facility owned by the SCFC.

Facilities that allow public access have audible alarms on the doors away from the main reception area. Dispatch Centers that do not require public access are kept locked after business hours for security. Exterior door locks have been replaced with keyless entry systems to maintain security with personnel turnover. Dispatch Centers have windows shuttered during major storm events and are equipped with emergency backup power and communication systems. Transportation in four wheel drive vehicles is made available to dispatchers during severe weather events.

The SCFC has developed the framework for a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), which includes preparedness for a pandemic and plans for creating employee awareness about pandemics and the plan.

CATEGORY 6 – PROCESS MANAGEMENT

6.1 How do you determine and what are your organization's core competencies, and how do they relate to your mission, competitive environment, and action plans?

Core competencies are identified within our agency's mission and strategic plan. Through Memorandums of Understanding with other natural resource agencies we attempt to focus on our core competencies and eliminate any overlap or duplication. Some of our core competencies are listed below:

- Fire Suppression & Detection
- Fire Dispatch
- Forest Resource Data & Interpretation
- Forest Inventory Analysis
- Forest Management Prescriptions for Forest Landowners
- Incident Management Teams
- Forestry Law Enforcement (Timber Theft/Woods Arson etc.)

6.2 How do you determine and what are your key work processes that produce, create or add value for your customers and your organization and how do they relate to your core competencies? How do you ensure these processes are used?

The agency Strategic Plan and Legislative Mandates are the main factors in determining what our key processes are.

The agency offers products and services to forest landowners and the general public in five key areas: forest protection, forest management, state forests, seedling production, and forestry education.

Forest Protection

The SCFC provides landowners with wildland firefighting assistance through a network of firefighters and equipment stationed throughout the state. Dispatching the closest firefighting unit is a key process in protecting the forest resource. The agency has three dispatch centers, located in Newberry, Florence, and Walterboro. These centers operate using a Computer Aided Dispatch System (CADS). A Statewide Dispatch Operations Coordinator provides operational and technical oversight of the dispatch centers. At this level, detailed and independent analyses of key success criteria are performed annually to facilitate consistency. Field personnel are provided with the tools to monitor their own activities. Reports with information such as response times, individual fire reports, monthly fire reports and non-emergency dispatches are distributed to supervisors monthly.

On July 1, 2005, the SCFC, utilizing National Fire Plan grants, upgraded to a commercial "off the shelf" 9-1-1 software system to provide Computer Aided Dispatch (CADS) for wildfire and emergency dispatch. The new CADS has improved the efficiency of our dispatch efforts (Graph 7.3-7) to wildland fire incidents (Graph 7.1-3). This technology gives us state-of-the-art dispatching capabilities unique throughout the nation. Such

improved dispatch operations will help reduce the losses of life, property and natural resources to wildland fires.

The SCFC takes notifications of forestry, agriculture, and wildlife outdoor burning at the regional dispatch centers. All other notifications for outdoor burning, including construction debris, right-of-way debris, trade waste and yard debris, are received by an automated voice mail system. This system is an efficient way to process large numbers of calls (400,000+ per year) in a timely fashion and to deliver a consistent fire safety message to the burner. (Graphs 7.3-6 & 7.3-7)

New technology for detection of forest pests is constantly being evaluated. An example of technological advance is the use of the Global Positioning System (GPS) in conducting aerial surveys. By using a preprogrammed GPS, the SCFC was able to eliminate one of three personnel required for the survey. GPS technology reduces the time required for each survey by providing the aircraft pilot a constant and continuous flight track throughout the survey.

The SCFC, with funding from the National Fire Plan, has designated 137 communities at extreme to high risk of wildfire and is working with them in conducting wildfire risk assessments. These on-going assessments provide homeowners, community planners, Fire Departments, and SCFC wildland firefighters with mitigation actions to reduce the wildfire hazard. A community that takes actions to reduce the risk of wildfire becomes eligible to receive national recognition as a "Firewise Community USA". Planning of homeowner and community leader education workshops is on-going throughout South Carolina. Additional Firewise presentations were made at various conferences, including the Nursery and Landscape Association. Cooperative efforts with Clemson Extension Service were made to promote Firewise with neighboring communities around the Sand Hills Research and Education Center. Presentations were made to homeowners' associations to encourage firewise developments. SCFC personnel used Firewise mobile exhibits 17 times during the year to reach 18,478 people, including participation in the SC Wildlife Expo and National Hunting & Fishing Day. Coordinators in each administrative region of the state ensure that homeowners, planners, and developers receive technical assistance and information regarding methods to reduce the risk of wildfires in their communities.

The SCFC administers National Fire Plan Volunteer Fire Assistance grant funds to assist Fire Departments in purchasing wildland fire fighting equipment, communication equipment, and personal protective equipment, and to provide training for fighting fires in the Wildland Urban Interface. This cooperative effort between the SCFC and Fire Departments is critical in achieving success in reducing losses to life, property, and our natural resources.

Five Wildfire Prevention Teams were deployed in historically high areas of wildfire occurrence across the state. The mission was to inform the public about how to conduct debris burning in a safe and lawful manner. Escapes from debris burning (mainly yard debris burning) are the number one cause of wildfires in the state.

Publications and products were developed and created with the message *Think Before You Burn* to emphasize compliance with outdoor burning laws. This message was printed on posters, brochures, and table tents and over 400,000 pieces of literature were distributed to local businesses, recycling centers, fire departments, and schools throughout the targeted

areas. A *Living with Fire* newspaper insert was distributed to the local newspapers serving these areas to help inform homeowners of the practices they can implement to make their homes Firewise.

Forest Management

The SCFC provides forest landowners with assistance in managing their woodlands. This involves a wide range of services including the development of management plans, the monitoring of environmental guidelines, and the re-inventory of South Carolina's forests. We perform on-site completion checks to ensure reforestation plans were followed and work performed properly, especially for customers receiving cost-share funds. We also provide training for loggers and contractors and provide courtesy exams while they are still on-the-job site performing the work. We utilize forest inventory data to encourage industry growth and development in South Carolina. We share this information with various development boards and the Department of Commerce.

Compliance with agency-approved environmental guidelines is monitored biannually on federal, state, industrial, and private woodlands. Results are published and widely distributed both in hard copy and over the Internet.

A key activity of the SCFC is continuous inventory of the state's forestland. Four two-person crews measure plots to exacting national standards. The USDA Forest Service is required to check a minimum of 5% of our plot work to ensure quality control. (Graph 7.1-2)

State Forests

The SCFC's state forests demonstrate sustainable multiple-use management to forest landowners and the general public. In FY 01, the state forests began developing a long-range plan. The plan was completed in June 2002 and approved by the Commissioners. Implementation of action items is now well underway.

The SCFC has completed a process to enhance management of the state forest system. This process combined a formal financial analysis and implementation of a Forest Resource Information System (FRIS) to provide managers with better information to ensure sustainable management and more predictable cash flow.

The system was developed by combining GIS and data based management systems with common forestry applications, including forest inventory software, growth and yield models, and forest planning models.

Completion of this project will allow the SCFC to optimize revenue from the state forests while ensuring the multiple uses and ecological values are maintained.

In accordance with the SC Code of Laws, twenty-five percent of revenue received from the sale of timber products on state forests is returned to the applicable county for their education system (Graph 7.3-8).

Local recreation advisory groups continue to provide assistance in implementing our recreation plans on state forests. They meet quarterly with the local forest directors.

State Lands

The SCFC provides forest management assistance to other state agencies that own woodland, providing for the opportunity to manage for multiple uses, including wildlife

habitat, recreation, environmental education, and sustainable forest products. SCFC foresters develop forest management plans for these properties, provide timber marking and cruising services, and assist in obtaining the best price for forest products. During FY 08 the SCFC provided assistance to six state agencies (SC Department of Corrections, SC Department of Natural Resources, SC Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, SC Department of Transportation, SC Department of Mental Health, and the University of South Carolina). Once sales are completed, this assistance will generate an estimated \$993,024 of revenue for these agencies.

Seedling Production

The Nursery and Tree Improvement (N&TI) Section of the SCFC supplies forest landowners with high-quality forest tree seedlings. Approximately 7.5 million seedlings were produced during FY 08. A 10% customer survey is implemented annually as a feedback mechanism to direct future product design. Ninety percent of those responding are satisfied with the overall quality of the products and services provided by the N&TI Section of the SCFC (Graph 7.2-1). In response to our survey, we learned that:

- Most customers are generally satisfied with their seedling purchases from the SCFC.
- 5 respondents (8% of returned surveys) identified seedling quality issues as areas for improvement.

An annual financial analysis is completed to adjust seedling production and price. This analysis is critical as the SCFC nursery program is supported by the sale of seedlings and seed. In January 2006, the N&TI Section of the SCFC entered into a research agreement with Cellfor, a forestry biotechnology company, to develop and produce the high quality genetic planting stock specifically suited to South Carolina. Genetic development of new plant material will be completed at the agency's Niederhof Seed Orchard in Jasper County. 100,000 Cellfor seedlings were produced at Taylor Nursery for the 2007-2008 planting season. Another 100,000 Cellfor seedlings were transplanted into Taylor Nursery seedling beds in June of 2008.

Forestry Education

One of SCFC's primary missions is to promote an awareness and appreciation by the public of the ecological, social, and economic functions and benefits of the state's forests. The agency's Environmental Education Program has been decimated by budget cuts and loss of dedicated personnel due to retirements and internal restructuring. However, SCFC employees on the state forests and in the Information & Education Division continue to support the agency's popular Wood Magic, PLT and Teachers' Tour programs and produce technical and general informational materials on forestry and forest-related subjects. With fewer staff available for direct classroom instruction, formal and non-formal educators in grades K-12 have become focal points for professional development training. SCFC has led the field in correlating educational training and programs to the SC Department of Education's Curriculum Standards in order to stay current with changing educational reforms. All programs and training are content oriented and standards-based to ensure that they meet the requirements of the State Department of Education (SDE). Computer based and web based educational programs are used whenever possible. Partnerships have been formed with federal and state agencies and the private sector to provide our remaining educational programs at low cost.

All educational programs offered by SCFC are evaluated and adjusted to meet perceived needs. The demand for these quality programs exceeds SCFC's ability to accommodate requests. (Graphs 7.1-9a & 7.1-10)

6.3 *How do you incorporate organizational knowledge, new technology, cost controls, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors such as cycle time into process design and delivery?*

A new Computer Aided Dispatch System (CADS) has been installed containing features, functions, and enhancements outlined in a request for proposals that incorporated suggestions and recommendations from dispatchers, fire managers, and information technology professionals. An "off-the-shelf" solution was selected over a custom developed system to control costs and to utilize technology and functions developed for 9-1-1 systems. Enhancements utilizing the power of GIS software and 911 address data have improved the efficiency in taking Smoke Management Burn Notifications, locating wildfires, and identifying and notifying the closest available resources to an incident.

In recent years, the SCFC has gone through numerous changes. Some of these changes have caused a reduction in our ability to provide services, primarily due to a decrease in staffing levels. During these years of change, the agency's leadership has continued to seek ways of becoming more efficient and effective. The SCFC surveys customers regarding our performance. (Graphs 7.2-1, 7.2-2 & 7.2-3) Our web site has been improved and updated so that citizens can obtain information and more easily contact us. We have continued to develop and conduct an extensive training program for our employees. Our aim is to seamlessly weave new technologies and improved employee performance into a tightly integrated system to deliver the best possible service to the people of South Carolina.

6.4 *How does your day-to-day operation of these processes ensure meeting key performance requirements?*

Forest Protection

The new CADS automates the process of determining compliance with Smoke Management Guidelines when dispatchers take burn notifications. This has reduced the process time (Graphs 7.5-1 & 7.5-2) and increased accuracy in complying with state regulations. Several key processes for dispatching resources to wildfires are now automated and/or improved to help reduce overall response times (see table 7.1-3). Closest available units are determined by CADS based on the road system. The new system allows for the incorporation of technology for automatic vehicle location to improve response time and assure safety of agency employees.

The automated yard debris burning notification system was modified so that all non-smoke management type vegetative debris burning notifications could be directed to that system as of July 1, 2001. This change redirects approximately 30,000 calls per year from our dispatch centers to the automated system. The reduction in call volume allows dispatchers to more efficiently handle smoke management notifications, radio communications, and wildfire calls. The automated system can handle 24 calls simultaneously, eliminating a caller's time on hold. Another benefit of this change was an overall reduction in the average cost per ten thousand calls. (Graph 7.3-7)

Forest Management

In general, statewide programs, such as Environmental Management and Forest Inventory and Analysis, are directly supervised by a Columbia staff forester with specific training in that program area.

The SCFC is a major partner in the National Aerial Photography Program (NAPP). Cooperating with the Department of Natural Resources, a state contract was issued to produce prints from the 2006-2007 flight for use by the agency's Insect & Disease Section for aerial surveys. Digital Orthophoto Quarter Quads (DOQQs) produced from this photography has been distributed to field personnel. DOQQs are utilized in desktop mapping and geographical information systems to develop recommendations and maps in the delivery of forest management services to forest landowners.

State Forests

Since state forests are required to operate on receipts and receive no state appropriated funds, a key performance requirement of our state forests is accurate budget planning. The implementation of a harvest scheduling model will assist in more accurate prediction of annual revenues.

Seedling Production

Key success criteria are included in Nursery and Tree Improvement facility manager's EPMS rating criteria. Success criteria include measures of seed & seedling quality, as well as protection of the productive capability of the nursery soil. The SCFC is a member of the Auburn University Cooperative whose staff provides technical oversight. Internally, agency staff reviews seedling production periodically.

Forestry Education

Individual evaluation by participants is a key component of all SCFC educational programs, including professional development programs such as Project Learning Tree and the SC Teachers Tour as well as material and lesson evaluation for the Wood Magic program. Program changes are constantly being considered and made based on these participant evaluations.

Pre- and post-tests are given to students in the Wood Magic Forest Fair to evaluate program effectiveness. The program has consistently shown significant increases in scores between the two tests. Fourth grade teachers are sent pre-visit materials as well as post-visit materials and lessons to enhance the content of the Wood Magic program.

In general, there is an overwhelming demand for SCFC forestry education programs that exceeds the capacity to deliver these programs. (Graphs 7.1-9a & 7.1-10)

6.5 *How do you systematically evaluate and improve your key product and service related work processes?*

Forest Management

Customer surveys are sent out following services work or delivery of management and stewardship plans. (Graphs 7.2-2 & 7.2-3) Responses are now returned to the Senior Consultant in the Plans and Support Department where they are logged and analyzed. Where applicable, copies of individual surveys are forwarded to regional foresters and the Forest Management Chief for follow-up with the landowners. Particular attention is given

to any negative responses. Contacts are then made with landowners to review responses and correct any problems with service delivery.

6.6 *What are your key support processes, and how do you evaluate, improve and update these processes to achieve better performance?*

Information Technology

Most aspects of our business involve technology and information management. We have established a presence on the Internet as a means to disseminate information. In FY 08 we began offering sales of state forest recreational permits through the *SC.gov* Internet portal. We are still exploring options for the sale of Nursery and Tree Improvement seedlings on-line.

The Information Systems group is responsible directly and indirectly for the maintenance and support of the agency's wide area network, 1 Windows NT Server, 8 Windows 2003 Servers, and over 200 computer users and their software applications. A goal was established to reduce the agency's replacement cycle for computers from 5-7 years to 3-5 years for mission critical users. Efforts are also under way to implement the Information Security Policy established by the South Carolina Enterprise Architecture Oversight Committee to ensure the agency's computer data is maintained in a secure, reliable, and sustainable environment.

The agency's wide area network is being moved to Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) circuits to conform to the State CIO's new statewide network. Although a more costly connection for the agency, MPLS provides redundancy at the core level needed for the agency's mission critical communications, dispatch and data systems. This will also allow the agency to consider Voice over IP telephony to the regional offices under a new state contract that could provide considerable savings and needed functionality.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology and spatial data is being used to improve and implement new processes in decision making. Using a National Fire Plan grant, a Fire Risk Assessment model is being created to help identify high fire risk areas of the state on a daily basis. A Smoke Model developed by the USDA Forest Service is being tested to improve prediction capabilities to mitigate the impact smoke from prescribed burns and wildfires may have on major highways. The goal is to reduce or eliminate highway collisions and fatalities due to smoke. Historical fire occurrence data is being spatially analyzed to aid managers in making resource allocation decisions and reducing response times to wildfires.

Training Programs

Wildland fire suppression and incident management are the core of SCFC training programs. All agency personnel are provided basic incident management training in the NIMS IS-700 class. All firefighter and emergency response personnel are trained in fire behavior, fire suppression tactics, and receive additional incident management training. Foresters, technicians, and other technical staff are trained in emerging issues and technology for forest and natural resource management. Foresters and technicians in the Forest Health, Best Management Practices and Forest Inventory Analysis programs receive specialized training in their respective areas. Supervisors and human resource/administrative staff participate in Supervisory Practices and Hiring Practices

training. Currently two individuals are enrolled in the Certified Public Manager Program. During FY 08, the SCFC had 3 employees graduate from the Certified Public Manager Program.

In FY 08, 85 training sessions were held for 1451 agency personnel. Additionally, the SCFC held Fire Management training sessions for 102 non-SCFC personnel, mostly from local fire departments. Four Certified Prescribed Fire Manager courses were taught for 141 non-SCFC land managers. Registered Foresters and Society of American Foresters Certified Foresters take training to meet annual and three year continuing education requirements, respectively.

Accounting, Procurement and Human Resources

Accounting, Procurement and Human Resources are essential support processes to firefighting and other field personnel. The staffs of these departments continually monitor existing processes and procedures. During the past 2 years, transaction processing time has been tracked and the results are noted in Category 7 under question 3. We work with the State Auditor's and Materials Management Offices, as well as the Office of Human Resources on audits to update and improve current processes.

6.7 How does your organization determine the resources needed to meet current and projected budget and financial obligations?

The agency monitors activities and costs in order to ensure resources are available to meet current demands. Based on these activities and costs, the agency is able to see the needs that are not being met due to lack of financial resources and addresses these issues through the annual state appropriation budget request and in applications for federal grant funds. Due to the inability to receive full funding of requests, the agency has to make concessions and prioritize activities each fiscal year to direct resources and protect the lives and property of landowners of SC. Deferred maintenance, aerial detection contracts, delayed or cancelled personnel replacements and replacement of firefighting equipment are just a few examples of items that may be cut back or delayed to allow the agency to meet its obligations with the financial resources available.

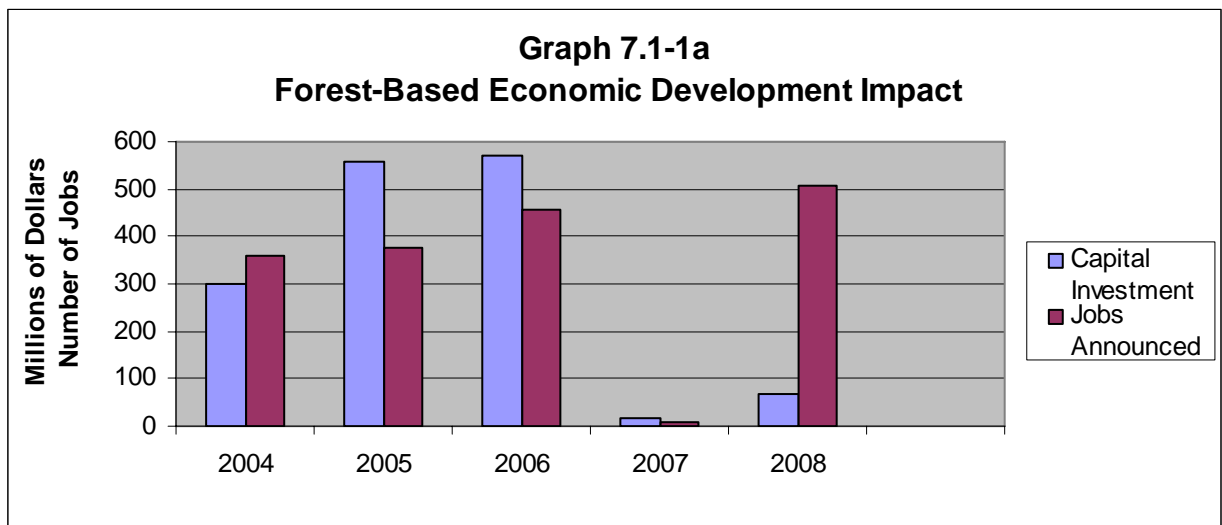
CATEGORY 7 – RESULTS

7.1 *What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of mission accomplishment/product and service performance that are important to your customers? How do your results compare to those of comparable organizations?*

Enhance the Resource

The nationwide slowdown in residential housing construction that began in spring of 2006 has continued through mid-2008. The number of new home starts fell an additional 30.6% in the South from June 2007 to June 2008. The number of new home starts is now less than half the number of homes built before the slowdown. Residential housing is a major outlet for lumber and wood panel products. Reduced home construction resulted in lower demands for these wood products and depressed lumber, plywood and OSB prices throughout the 2007-2008 fiscal year.

Despite the recent construction slowdown, the impact of forestry on South Carolina's economy remains strong. An IMPLAN (Impact Analysis for Planning) study showed forestry is the #1 manufacturing industry in South Carolina in terms of employment (44,708 jobs) and labor income (\$2.4 billion). Forestry contributes over \$17 billion in total industry output to South Carolina's economy.

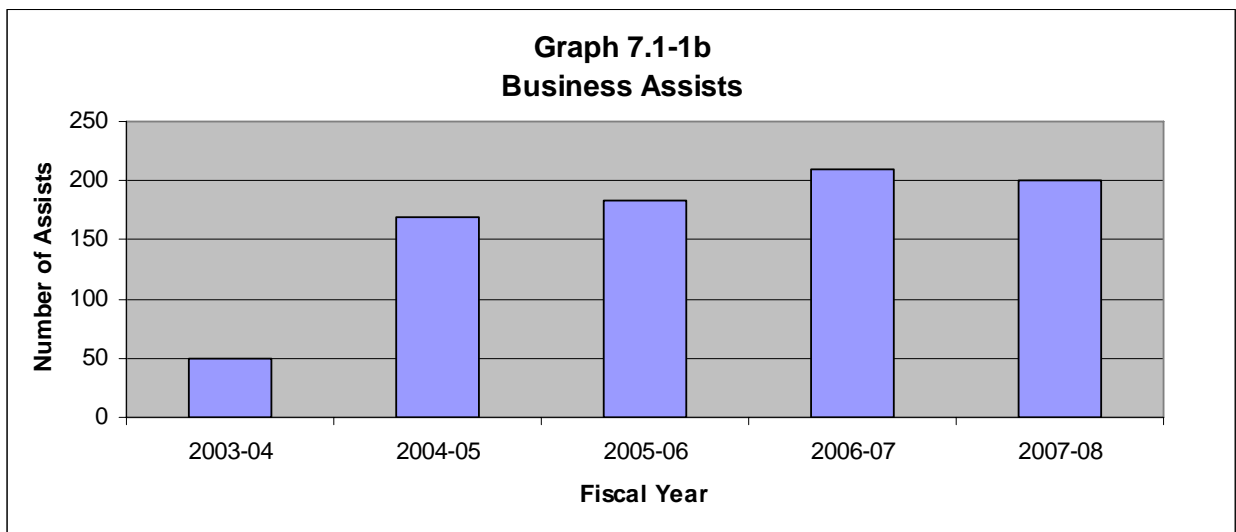


During FY 2007-2008, five forest industry announcements were made that involved \$65.7 million in new capital investment and 505 new jobs. Roseburg Forest products purchased Georgia Pacific's Holly Hill fiberboard plant and invested \$49 million in capital improvements. In Barnwell County, Elkay Cabinet announced plans for a \$12 million plant that would employ 300 residents. Other new projects included a wood molding plant in Manning, a pallet and packaging plant in Calhoun County, and a corporate expansion by Domtar Paper in Fort Mill.

Other major changes in South Carolina's forest industry included MeadWestvaco's acquisition of Eastman Chemical Company's pine chemical line and the sale of MeadWestvaco's 71-year-old kraft paper mill in North Charleston to Illinois-based

KapStone Paper and Packaging Corporation for \$485 million. The sale included a lumber mill in Summerville and chip mills in Elgin, Hampton, Andrews, and Kinards. Chesterfield Lumber was purchased by Canfor Corporation for \$18 million. Finally, ArborGen announced the agreement to acquire the nursery and tree improvement operations from MeadWestvaco and International Paper Company.

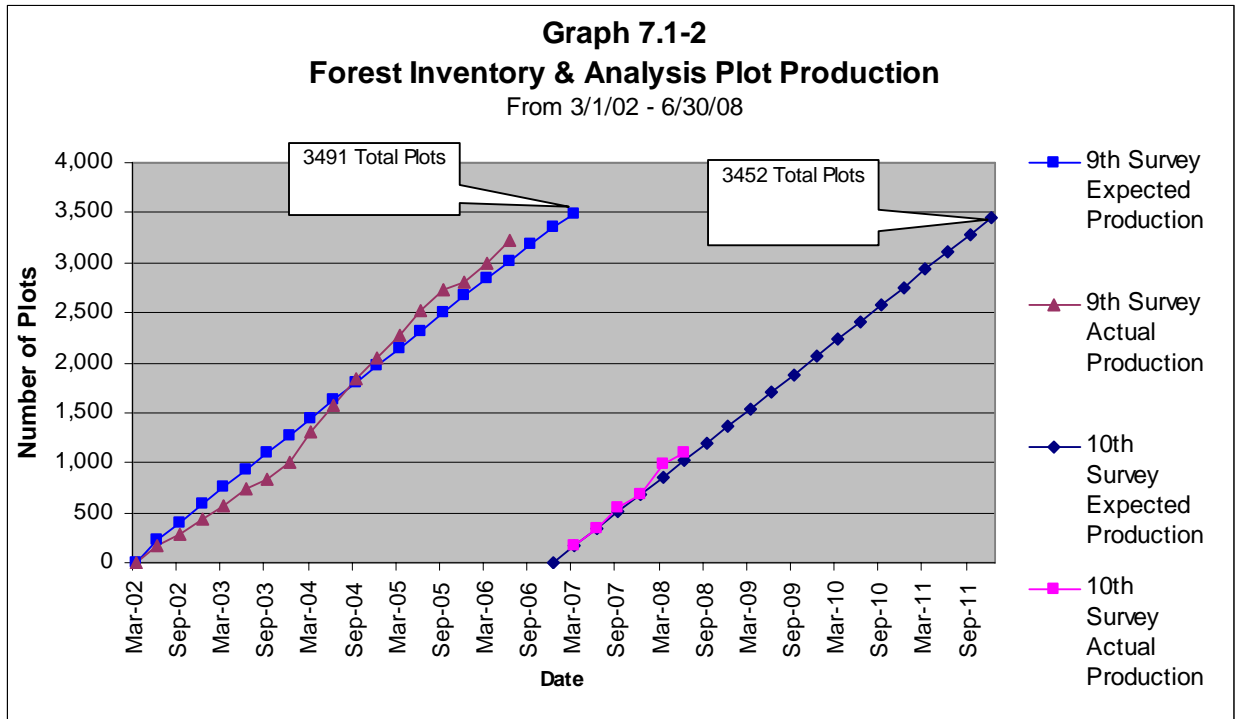
During the 2008 fiscal year, the SCFC Resource Development Division actively participated in 21 economic development projects. 20 of the 21 projects involved utilization of biomass in the manufacture of pellets (9 projects), biofuels (6 projects), and electric power generation (5 projects). The SCFC represented the agency and forestry community through 18 statewide and regional economic development organizations. Finally, 201 individual business assists were made to address single-issue requests. At this time we do not have any comparable data in this area to report; however, we are attempting to coordinate with the SGSF and the NASF to obtain comparable data.



In fiscal year 2008, the SCFC's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program completed 753 FIA plots. The FIA program completed data collection on one panel (20% of the entire sample plot locations) and has completed 61% of the second panel of data collection. The FIA program completed 32 product utilization studies on active logging operations across the state and collected Timber Product Output (TPO) data on all primary wood producing mills within the state.

The South Carolina Forestry Commission FIA program is 32% complete with the 10th inventory of the state through Fiscal Year 2008 under the National FIA plot design. Of the 13 southern states, South Carolina was the first state to complete the 8th inventory (2002) and the 9th inventory (2006). Subsequently, South Carolina is the first state to be in the 10th inventory in the Southern Region.

The FIA program is currently fully staffed with four two-person crews located in strategic locations across the state. If funding and staffing remain constant, expected completion of the 10th survey is December, 2011. Data for the 9th survey will be available online and a published report is expected by December, 2008.



Protect the Resource

Table 7.1-3
SUMMARY AND COMPARISON OF DISPATCH TIMES
FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999 through 2008

	Average Minutes									
	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03	FY 04	FY 05	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08
Dispatching ¹	6.11	5.68	5.42	6.27	5.12	5.10	6.33	4.18	3.56	3.53
Contact Establish ²	4.39	4.14	4.00	3.09	4.15	4.18	3.83	4.47	4.21	3.95
Rolling ³	4.38	4.37	3.97	3.69	4.13	3.83	4.22	4.11	4.97	5.40
Enroute ⁴	8.32	8.40	7.72	6.06	7.92	7.95	7.10	8.44	9.11	9.04
Travel ⁵	24.48	23.60	23.03	22.60	22.49	22.39	22.11	20.09	22.88	22.62
Response ⁶	36.92	35.05	34.40	34.80	35.70	33.57	35.19	32.45	35.54	35.23

¹ Time between initial report of wildfire and first attempt to contact initial attack warden.

² Time between first attempt to contact warden and when contact was established.

³ Time between contact established with warden and his enroute time.

⁴ Time between first attempt to contact warden and his enroute time.

⁵ Time between going enroute and arriving at wildfire.

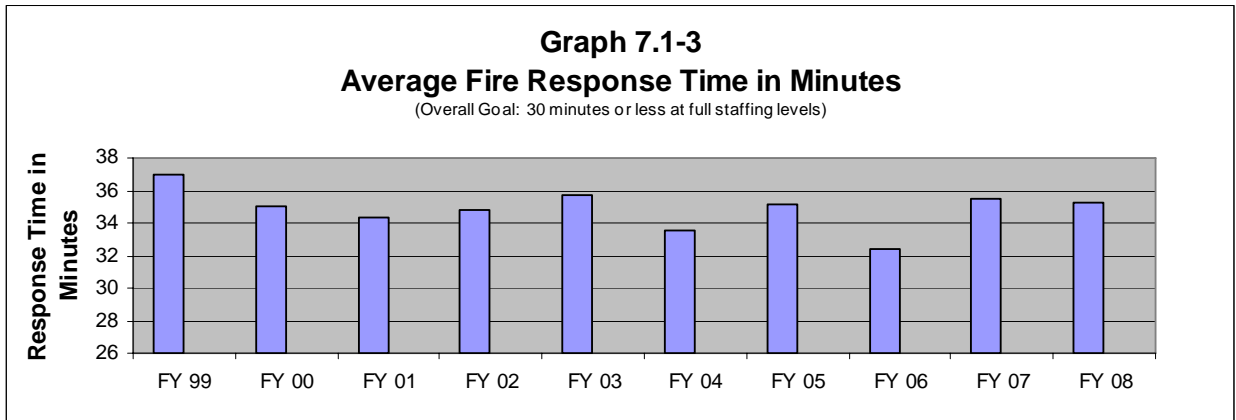
⁶ Time between initial report of wildfire and arrival of initial attack warden.

The chart above shows various benchmarks in the process of responding to a wildfire. With the implementation of the new CADS in FY06, the average time from receiving the wildfire call and assigning a firefighter to it was reduced by 2.15 minutes. This was further reduced by another 37-39 seconds on average the following two years.

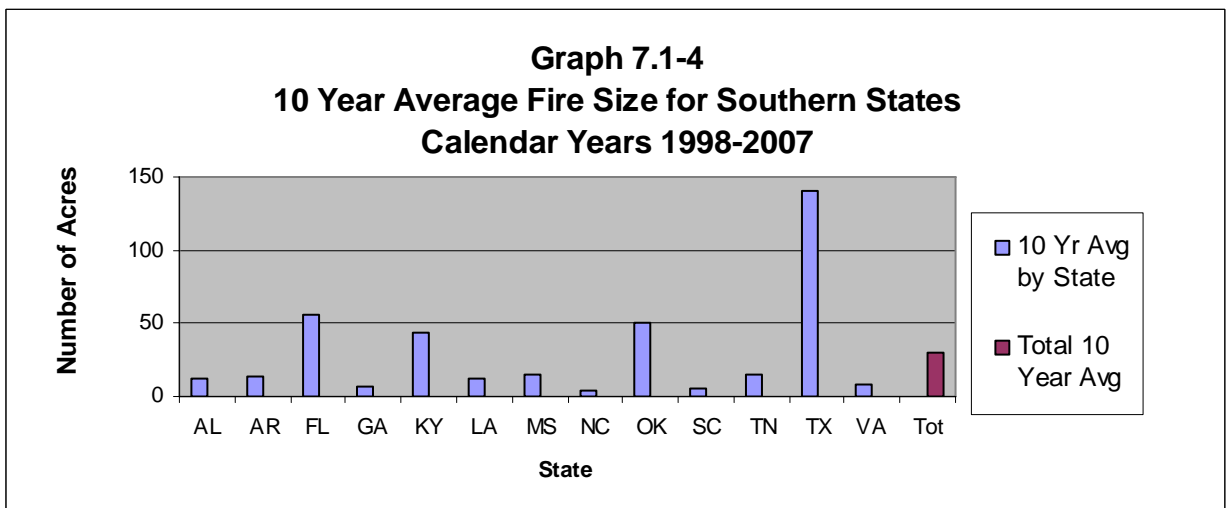
Response time to wildland fires is dependent upon many factors, some of which are beyond our control, such as traffic congestion and budget related staffing levels. We refer to fire

response time as the time from when we receive the first report of a wildfire until the time our fire warden arrives on the scene.

Internally we measure the different segments of response time and strive to improve each segment with a goal of reducing overall response time. Graph 7.1-3 illustrates that our average response time for FY 08 was 35.23 minutes. This was an 18 second decrease in the statewide average response time in FY 08 compared to FY 07. In surveying our southern states we found SCFC is the benchmark in tracking response times as no other states track response times in the way that we do.

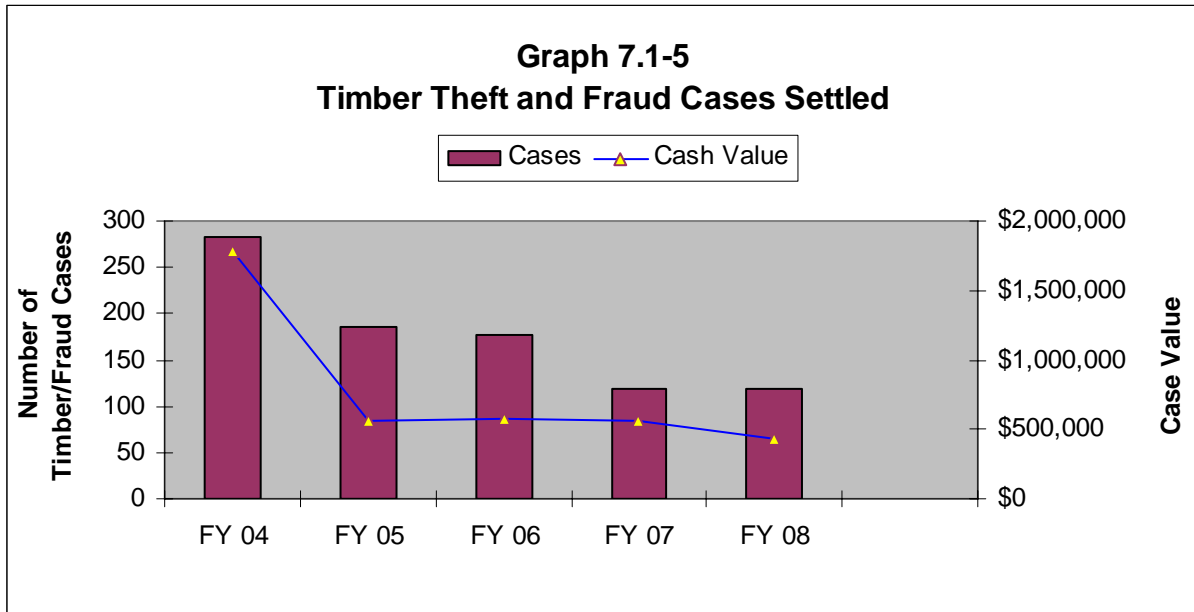


The SCFC measures and compares the average fire size on state and private lands with twelve other southern states. The 10-year average fire size is 29.37 acres per fire for the thirteen southern states. South Carolina has the second lowest 10-year average fire size with 5.88 acres per fire as shown in Graph 7.1-4.

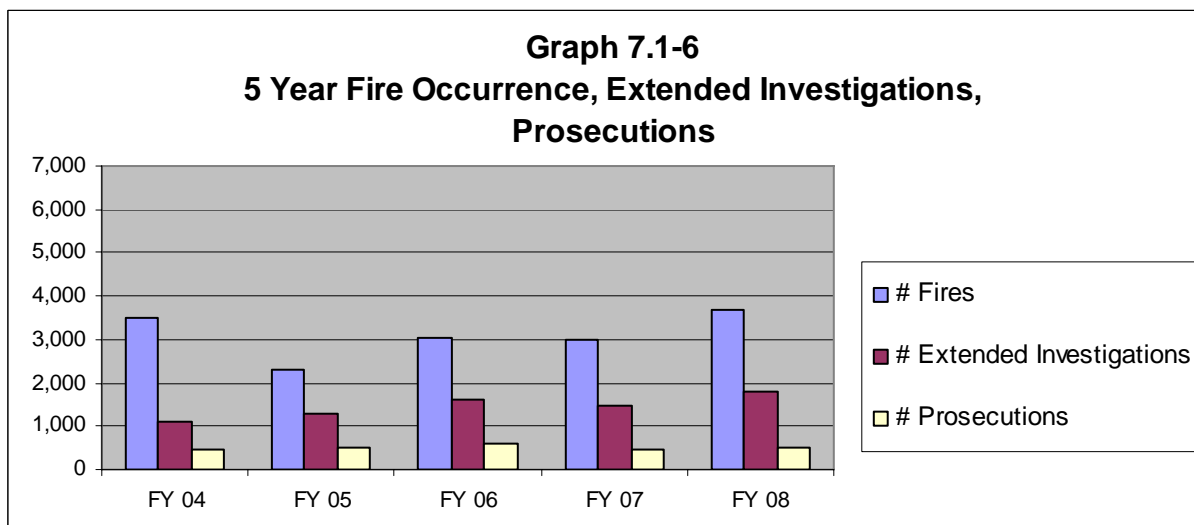


The Law Enforcement Program strives to reduce woods arson and forest product theft and fraud. The program reinforces fire prevention efforts through the enforcement of state fire laws. During FY 08, the agency had 33 commissioned officers, including 4 full-time investigators. Although the number of timber theft/fraud cases increased this year, due to

sustained, aggressive enforcement of timber transaction laws, the value of each case has drastically reduced by 21% or \$118,631. (Graph 7.1-5)

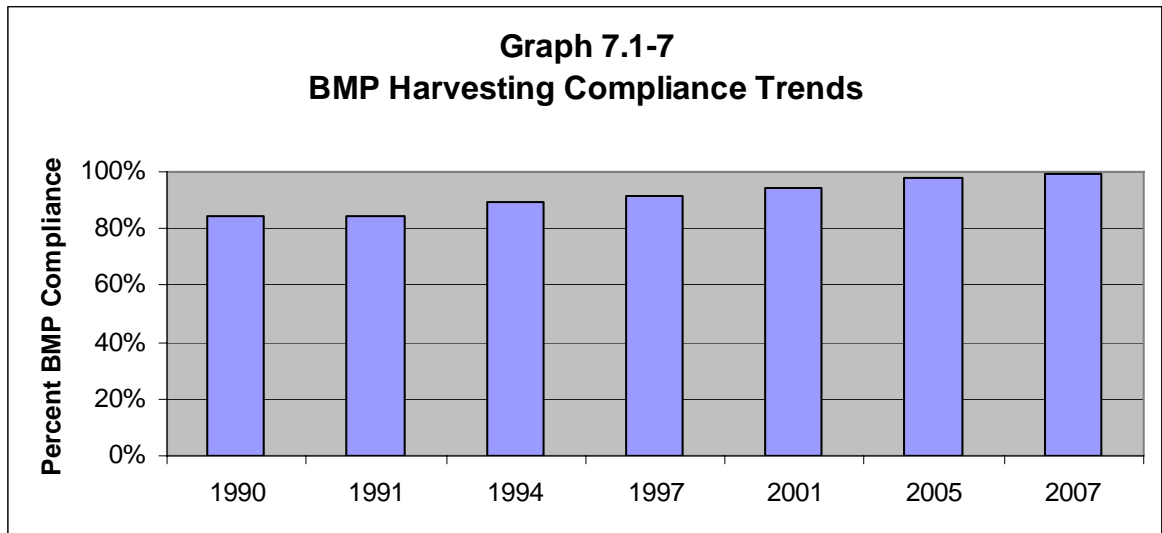


Extended investigation of wildfires, especially arson related, was emphasized during the year, resulting in an increase in the number of fire-related prosecutions. (Graph 7.1-6) Woods arson was the likely cause for 84 wildfires. Eight individuals, responsible for 42 wildfires, were prosecuted for woods arson. Arson is historically hard to prove and this figure represents an impressive 50% arrest rate. The SCFC's Law Enforcement Program serves as a benchmark for our neighboring states, which currently do not actively investigate timber theft cases.

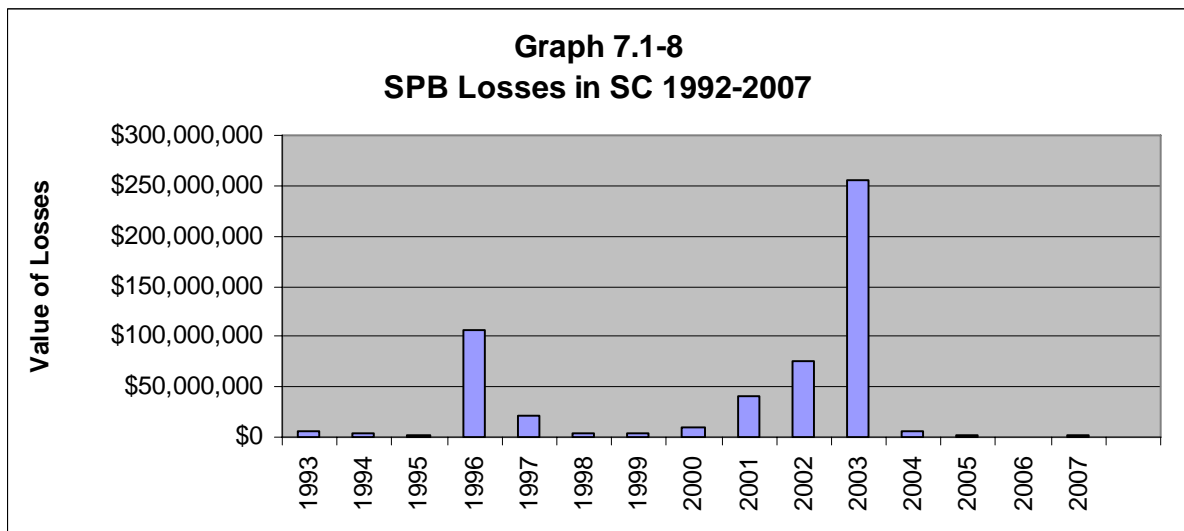


Graph 7.1-7 shows compliance with harvesting Best Management Practices from previous surveys. Compliance for BMPs related to timber harvesting rose to 99% for 2007,

demonstrating continual improvement since monitoring began in 1990. Compliance for harvesting BMPs was 84.5% in 1990, 84.7% in 1991, 89.5% in 1994, 91.5% in 1997, 94.0% in 2001, and 98% in 2005. Further analysis and publication of data will be conducted in FY 2009. BMP compliance in South Carolina compares favorably with other southeastern states such as North Carolina (82%), Georgia (99.4%), Florida (98.6%), and Alabama (98.1%).



The Southern Pine Beetle (SPB), endemic to SC, builds to epidemic levels on a 5 to 10 year cycle. The preliminary indicators point to the possibility of an increase in SPB activity in the next 1-3 years. Since 1995, SC has suffered the two worst outbreaks on record, with losses exceeding a half-billion dollars. (Graph 7.1-8) SCFC developed a Southern Pine Beetle Prevention Program to reduce losses on privately owned woodlands. During the year, 227 landowners have completed SPB prevention or restoration practices on over 5,400 acres.

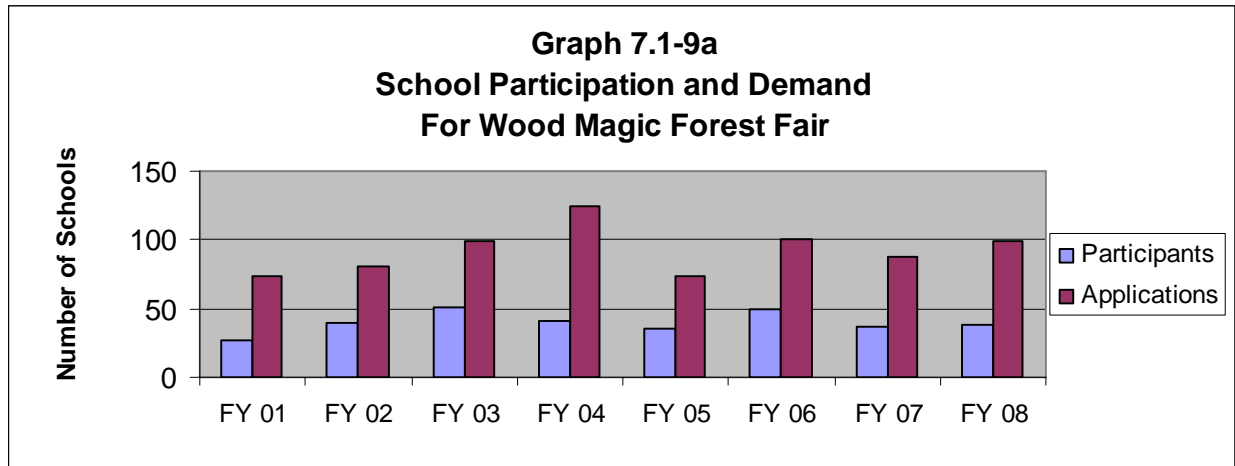


Raise Awareness about the Resource

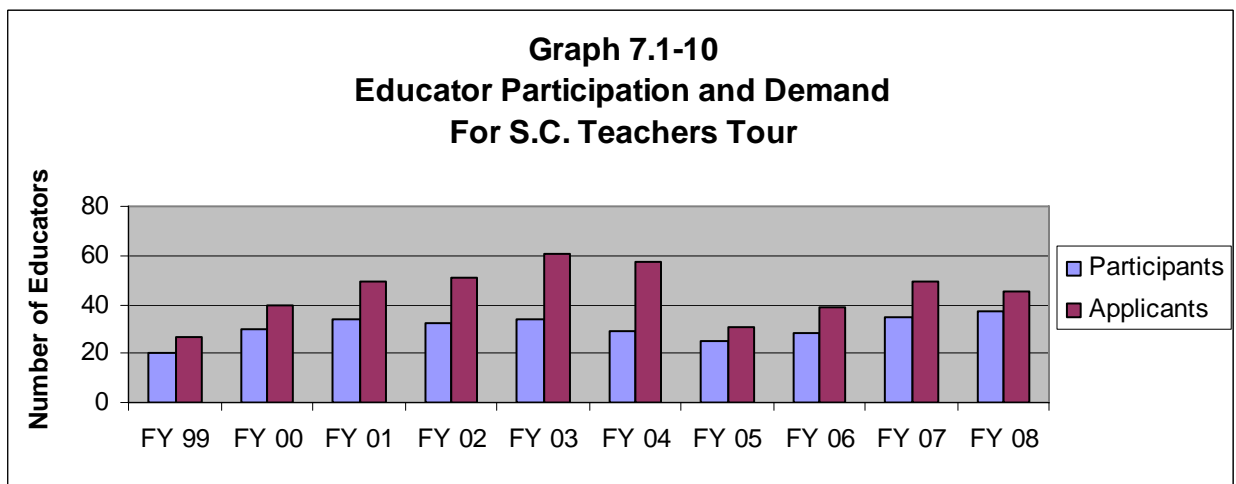
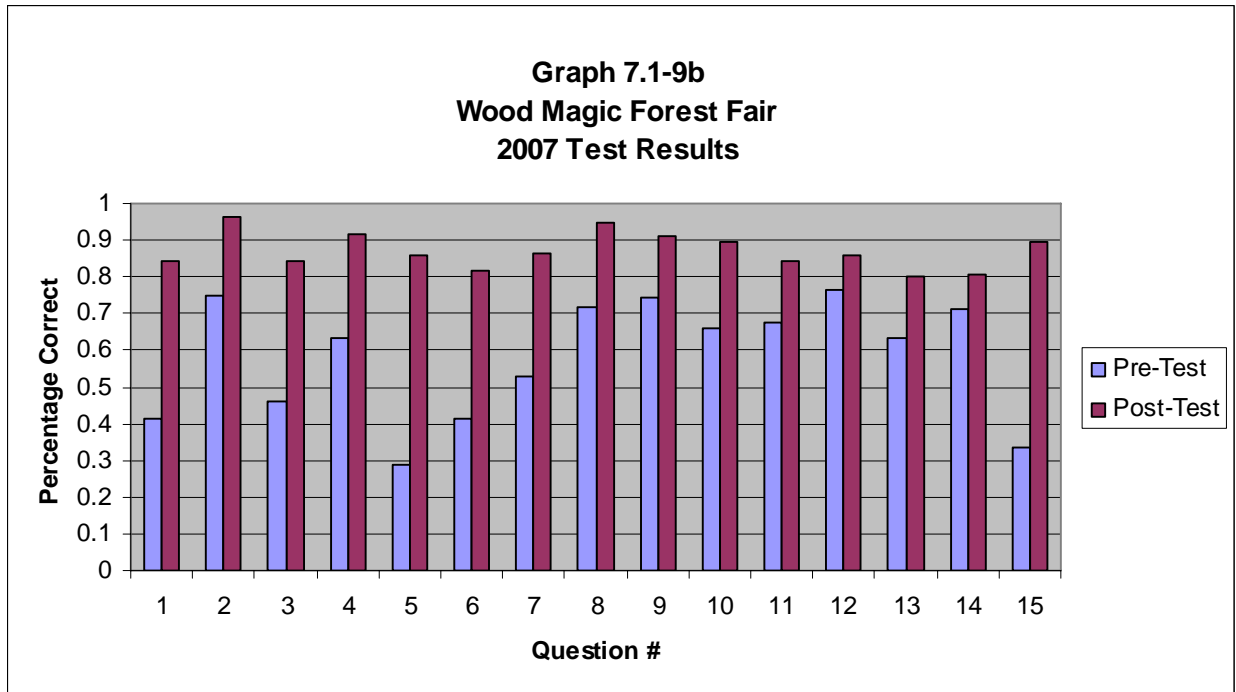
The SCFC strives to reach South Carolina's school children through "train the trainer" programs for teachers such as Project Learning Tree (PLT) and the annual SC Teachers Tour. Each of these programs has a multiplier effect. By training educators, we are continuously reaching thousands of students in return. In FY 2008, the SCFC hosted 18 workshops involving 355 participants who in turn, influenced 66,406 students.

The Wood Magic Forest Fair, designed for fourth graders, also equips teachers to explore such topics as sustainable forestry and recycling. All SCFC education programs meet the state's requirements for teacher certification and classroom instruction.

In recent years, interest in and applications for both the Teachers Tour and the Forest Fair have exceeded the number of programs we were able to offer. The primary limiting factor is the growing scarcity of qualified instructors due to SCFC and cooperator staff reductions and budget restraints (Graphs 7.1-9a and 7.1-10). Based on the results of our recent survey of the SGSF, South Carolina was the only state offering the Wood Magic Forest Fair.

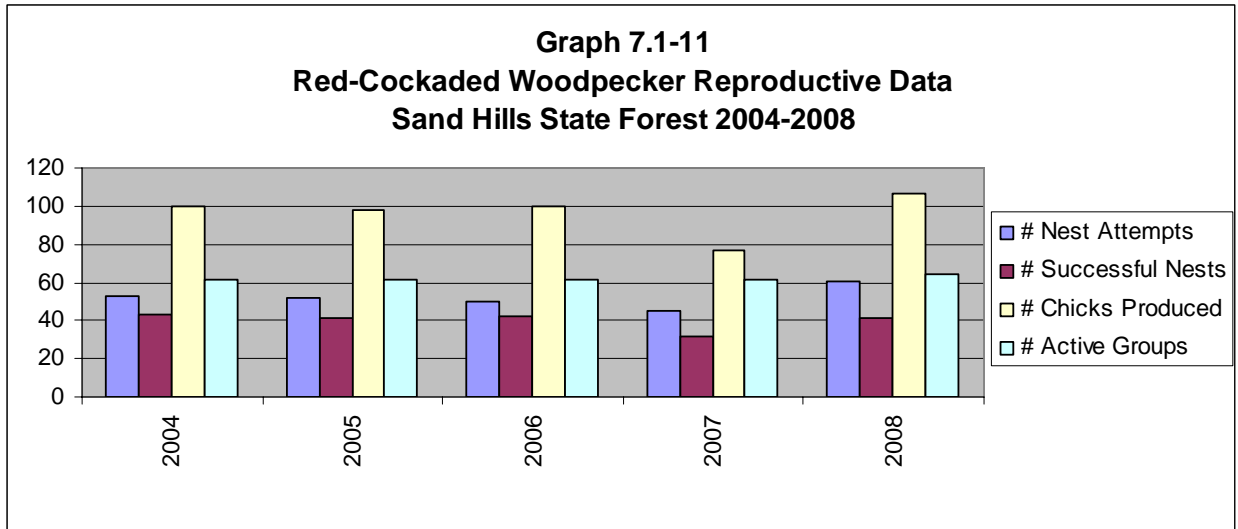


On average, pre-course test results were 58% and post-course test results were 87%. Student understanding improved by 29%.



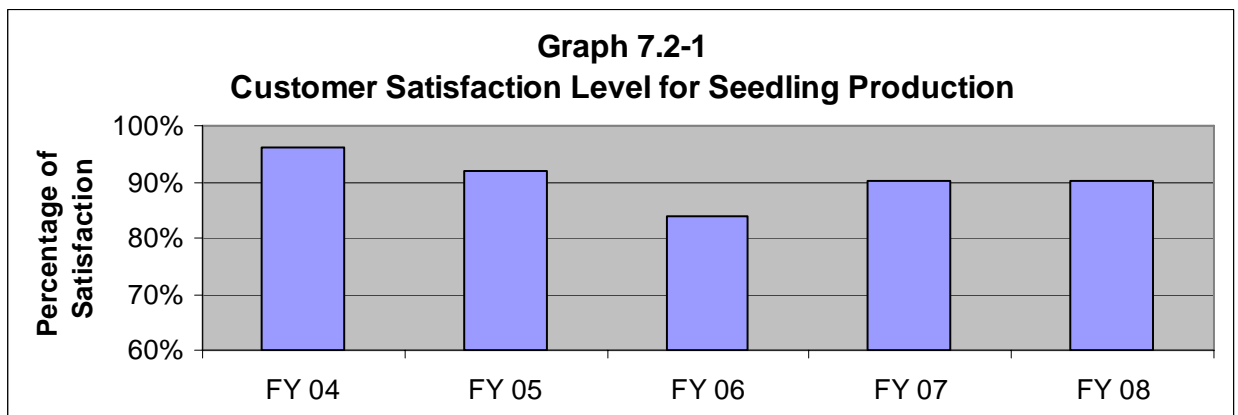
Sand Hills State Forest is one component of a recovery population in Chesterfield County for the federally endangered Red Cockaded Woodpecker. In cooperation with SC DNR biologists, habitat for this species on the state forest is managed to improve conditions for nesting and foraging. Management activities include installation of artificial cavities, control of mid-story vegetation and establishment of appropriate tree species and stand density to provide recruitment and foraging habitat. A long range recovery goal of 127 red-cockaded woodpecker clusters has been set for Sand Hills State Forest.

Graph 7.1-11 shows species reproductive trends from 2004-2008. The number of active woodpecker groups on Sand Hills State Forest has increased from 61 groups in 2004 to 64 groups in 2008. The number of offspring produced by these groups increased from 100 to 107 during the same period.



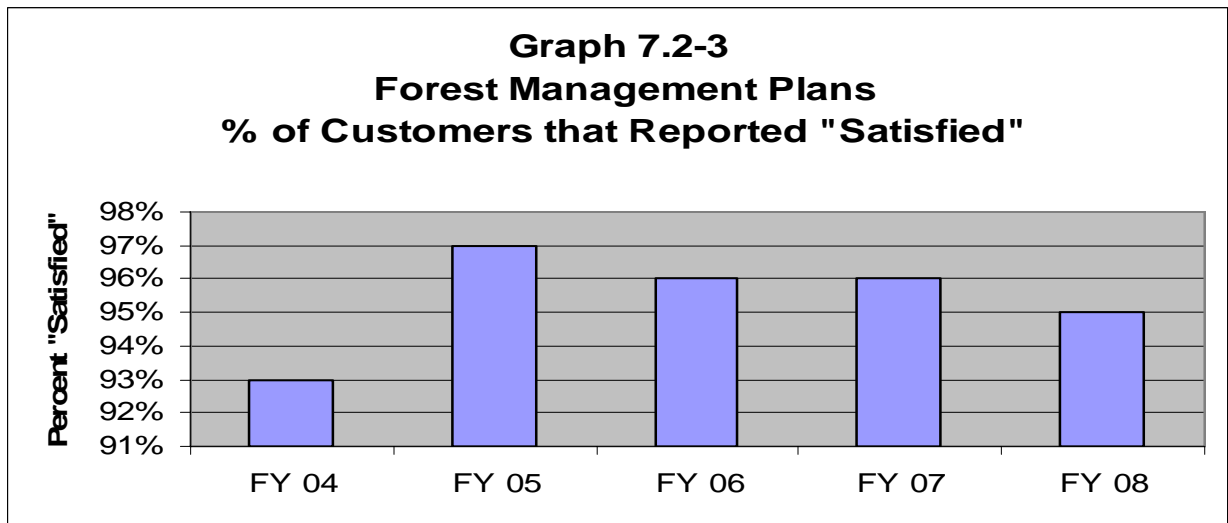
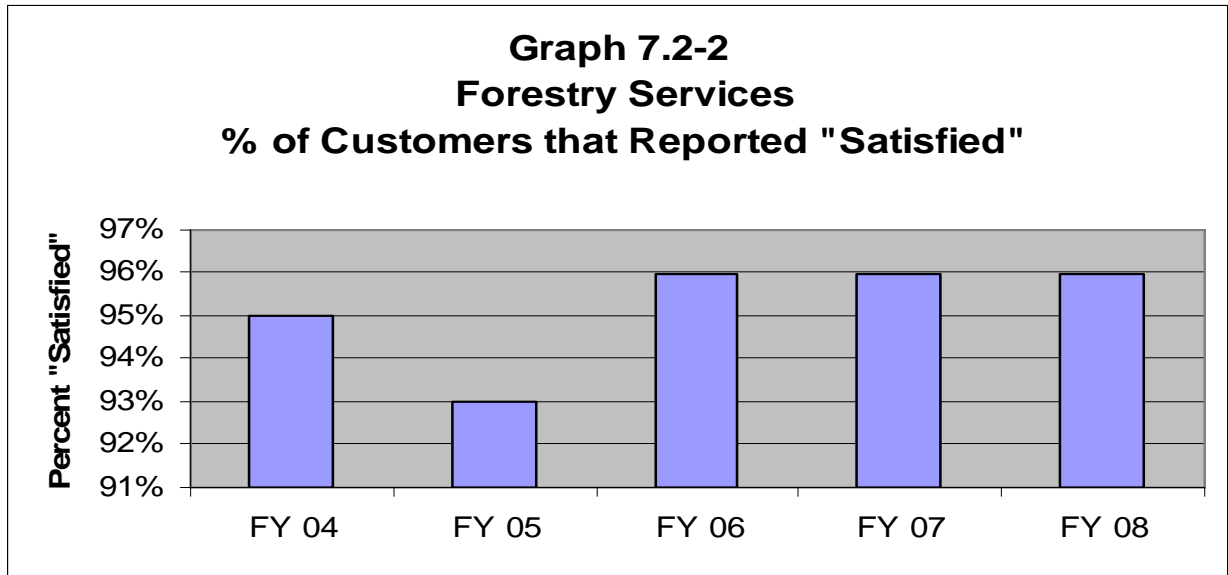
7.2 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures on customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction? How do your results compare to those of comparable organizations?

Each year the SCFC surveys a 10% sample of seedling customers to determine general satisfaction with our seedlings and to target areas for improvement. Since beginning the survey, customer satisfaction has averaged 94% overall. The 2008 survey indicated that 90% of our customers were satisfied with our seedling quality and service. Of the customer comments on returned survey forms, 63% were complimentary of the nursery program. Of the 10 comments that suggested areas for improvement, half of the comments concerned seedling quality issues. All comments are being evaluated and addressed as possible.



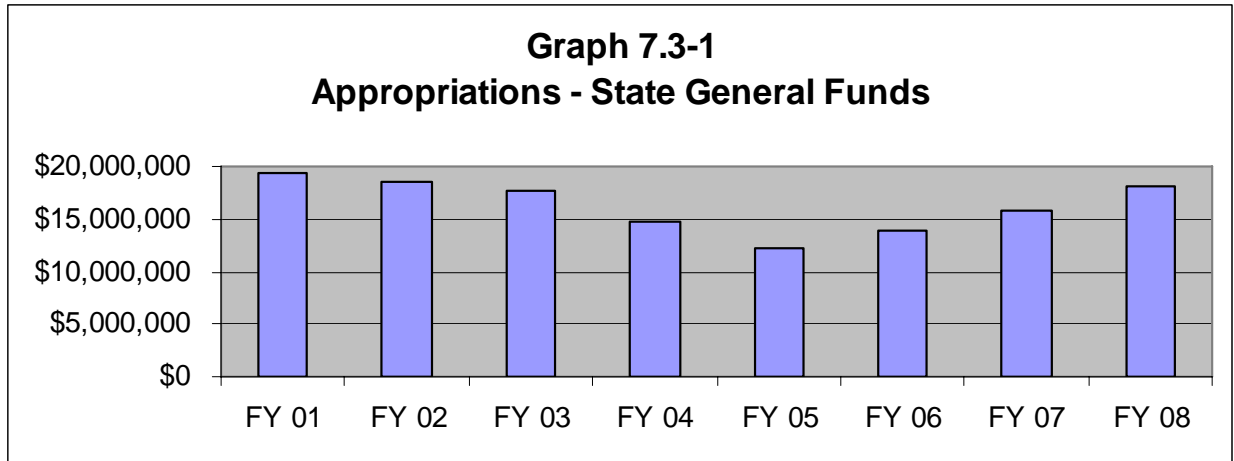
In 1999 we began measuring customer satisfaction levels with our forestry services and our technical forest management assistance. Graphs 7.2-2 and 7.2-3 illustrate our overall satisfaction levels for the last 5 fiscal years. Graph 7.2-3 reflects a decrease in satisfaction levels in recent years which may have been impacted by a reduction in forester staffing levels and an increase in workload.

During FY 08, we began measuring customer satisfaction levels with our stewardship management assistance. Responses indicate that 98% of customers served were satisfied. At this time we do not have any comparable data in the customer satisfaction area to report; however, we are attempting to coordinate with the Southern Group of State Foresters and the National Association of State Foresters to obtain comparable data.



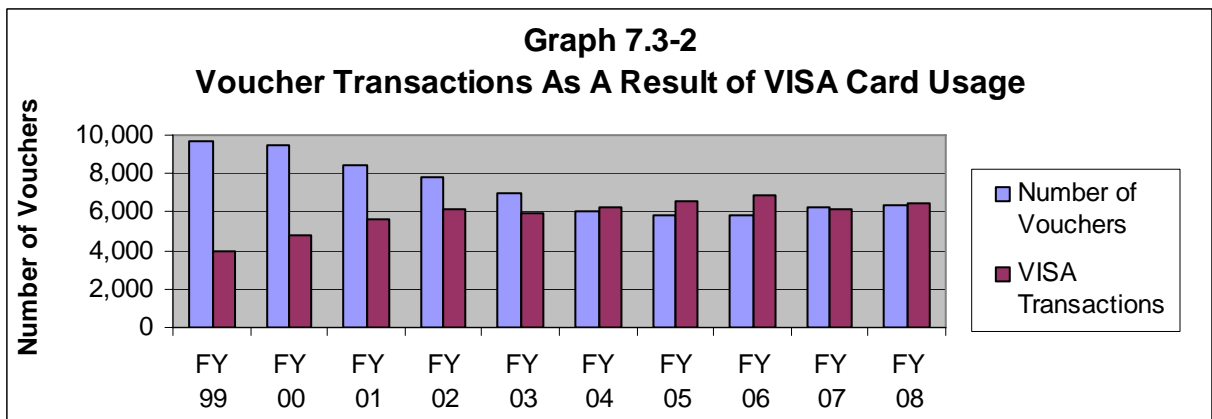
7.3 What are your performance levels for your key measures on financial performance, including measures of cost containment, as appropriate?

The SCFC's recurring State Appropriated funds, when adjusted for inflation, have been reduced 33% since FY 01 (Graph 7.3-1). With the majority of state appropriated funds being used for salaries and benefits, the agency has experienced a corresponding reduction in its workforce.

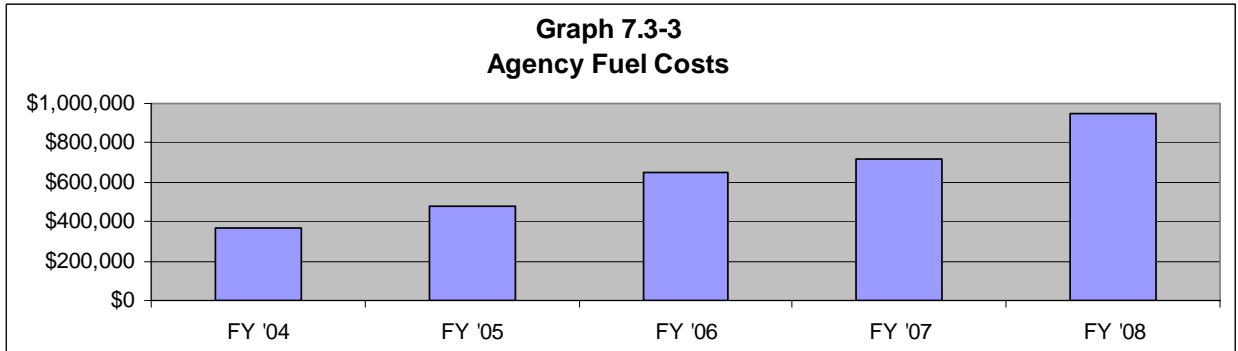


Processing Time of Transactions - Based on the tracking of transactions through the system, SCFC processes a vendor's invoice or an employee's travel request in an average of 1 day. This is under the agency's goal of 3 days from the date received to have a voucher processed and submitted to the Comptroller General's office for payment.

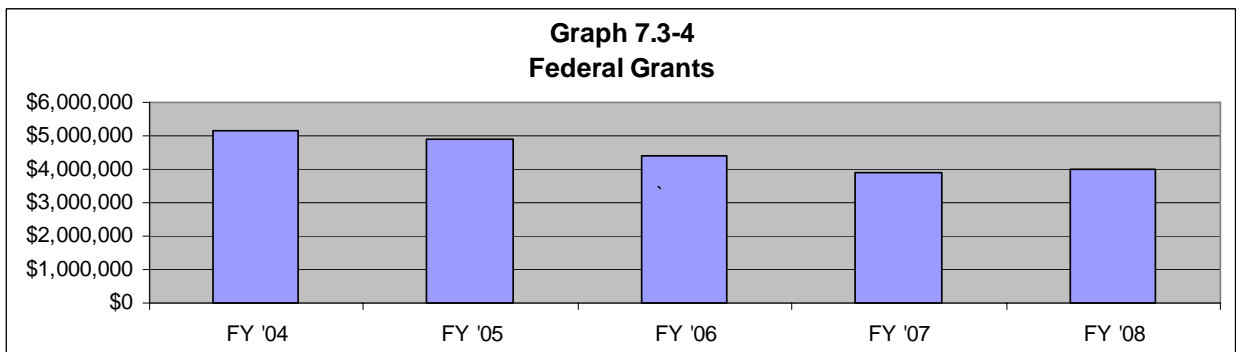
SCFC use of the state procurement card VISA resulted in a significant decline and stabilization of the number of voucher transactions processed over the past several years, ultimately reducing the need for 1 FTE. (Graph 7.3-2)



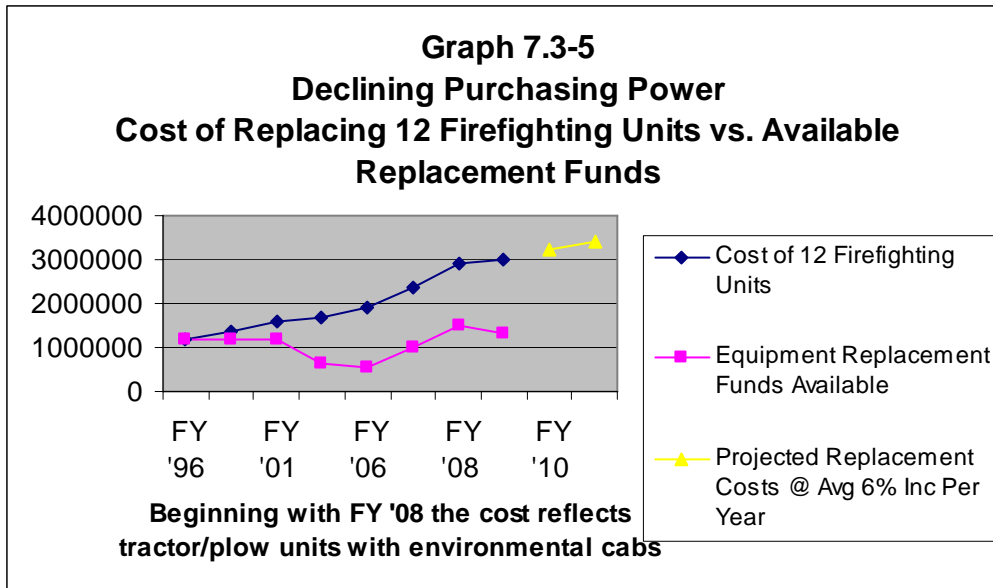
Approximately 40% of regional operating budgets represent fuel costs. With fuel costs having increased over 100% in the past few years (Graph 7.3-3) regional operating budgets continue to be strained. During FY 2008, Management requested Internal Audit to review and analyze the transactions in an effort to identify any opportunities for cost-savings. Opportunities have been identified and action steps are in process. In FY 08, the Commission received \$1,941 in discounts by expediently processing payments to the fuel vendor as well as reviewing, identifying, and disputing erroneous charges.



Operating budgets for protection services now are funded primarily with short-term federal grants and revenue earned from forestry services. Federal grants have been reduced significantly over the past several years (Graph 7.3-4) However, the volume of services has decreased in recent years due to weather limitations.



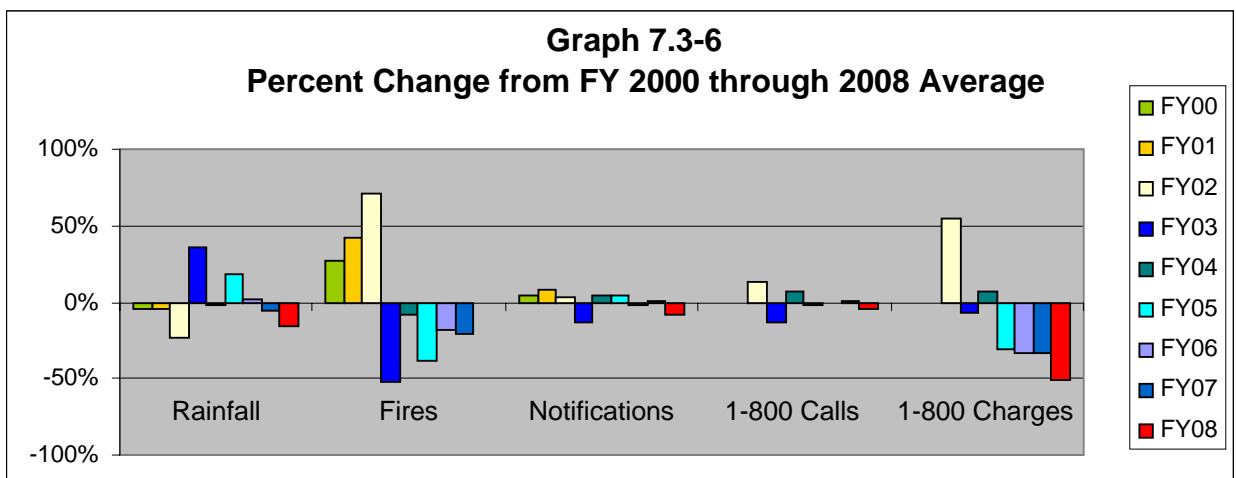
In 1996 the Legislature appropriated funding for a 15 year replacement cycle for firefighting equipment. While the cost of a firefighting unit has increased, the agency's purchasing power for a unit has declined significantly over the past decade. The shortfall for maintaining a 15 year replacement cycle has increased to approximately \$2 million. (Graph 7.3-5)



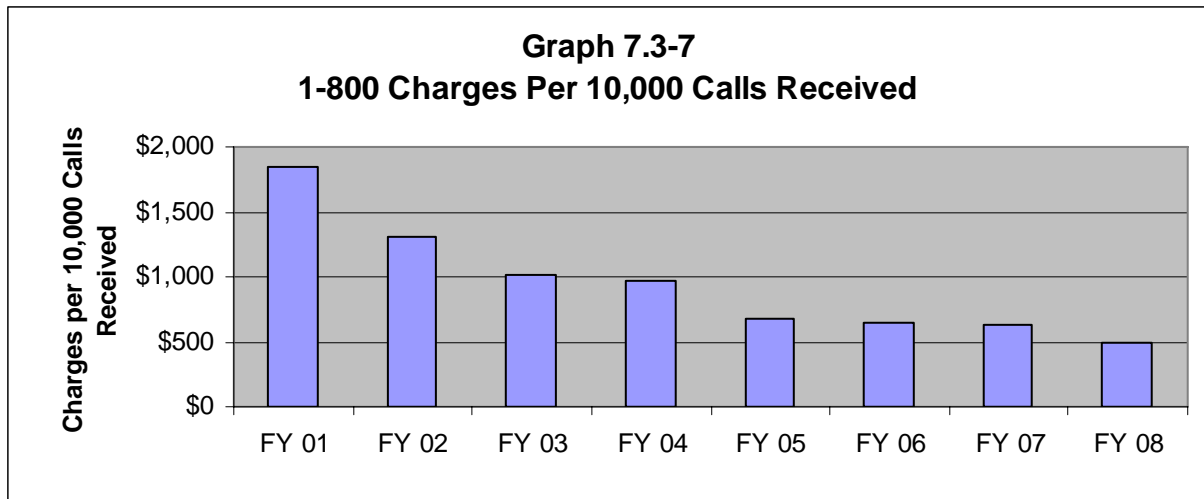
In FY 02, the SCFC began routing all burning notifications, except those for forestry, wildlife and agricultural purposes, to an automated notification system. This greatly improved the efficiency of the SCFC in handling these calls, dispatchers handling other calls, and substantial savings in 1-800 charges. Dispatch managers receive a list each month of 1-800 calls that were 8 minutes or longer to identify opportunities for further cost reduction.

Graph 7.3-6 shows the percent change from the average in the amount of rainfall, number of fires, number of burning notifications, number of 1-800 calls, and charges for those 1-800 calls. A reduction in rainfall normally produces an increase in fires. An increase in notification normally increased 1-800 calls.

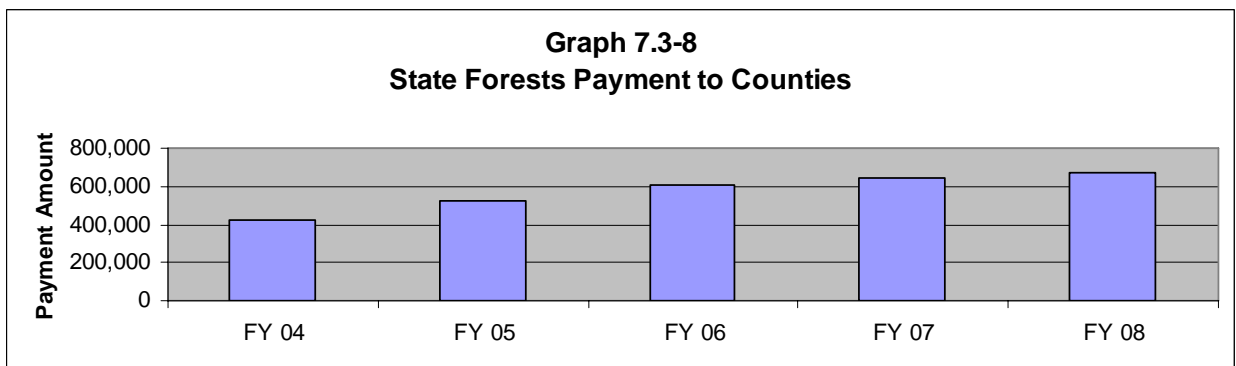
The SCFC was able to achieve a 74% reduction in annual 1-800 charges since implementing changes in FY 02. This reduction can be attributed to routing more outdoor burn notification to an automated system, a new computer aided dispatch system for handling smoke management notifications, and new state contract rates for 1-800 calls.



When the SCFC migrated from local fire towers to regional dispatch centers, toll free numbers were established to encourage the public to comply with state laws requiring them to notify the SCFC when burning outdoors. The SCFC handles over 400,000 burning notification calls per year. Graph 7.3-7 shows the trend of improved efficiency and effectiveness in handling large volumes of incoming 1-800 calls with the cost per 10,000 calls received. In FY 02, the SCFC began routing all burning notifications, except those for forestry, wildlife, and agriculture purposes, to an automated notification system. This monitoring call length and new computer aided dispatch software have improved a dispatcher's efficiency and effectiveness in handling calls as well as decreasing costs each fiscal year.



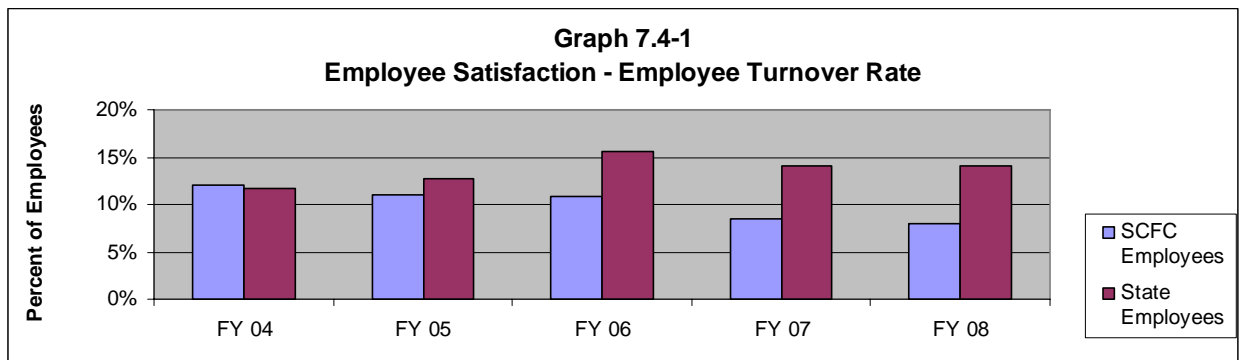
The SCFC is the only state agency that shares revenue produced from state owned lands with the counties where the properties are located. Southern states surveyed and those responding further reveal that the SCFC is a leader in the sharing of revenue, as no other state gives back a percentage as large as we do. Twenty-five percent of all revenue that the agency receives from use of the land or products sold, such as timber or pine straw, is returned to the county to support local education systems. Based on receipts received during FY 08, over \$600,000 was distributed to twelve counties. (Graph 7.3-8) Chesterfield and Sumter counties where Sand Hills State Forest and Manchester State Forest are respectively located received the largest payments.



7.4 What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of workforce engagement, workforce satisfaction, the development of your workforce, including leaders, workforce retention, workforce climate including workplace health, safety, and security?

The turnover for the agency is consistently lower than the turnover for all state employees. The agency's turnover for FY 08 is 8.31%. (Graph 7.4-1)

The average state service for all state employees is currently 11.5 years, compared to the average state service for SCFC employees of 13.25 years. We continue to believe this comparison is indicative of our employees enjoying their work and their working environment.

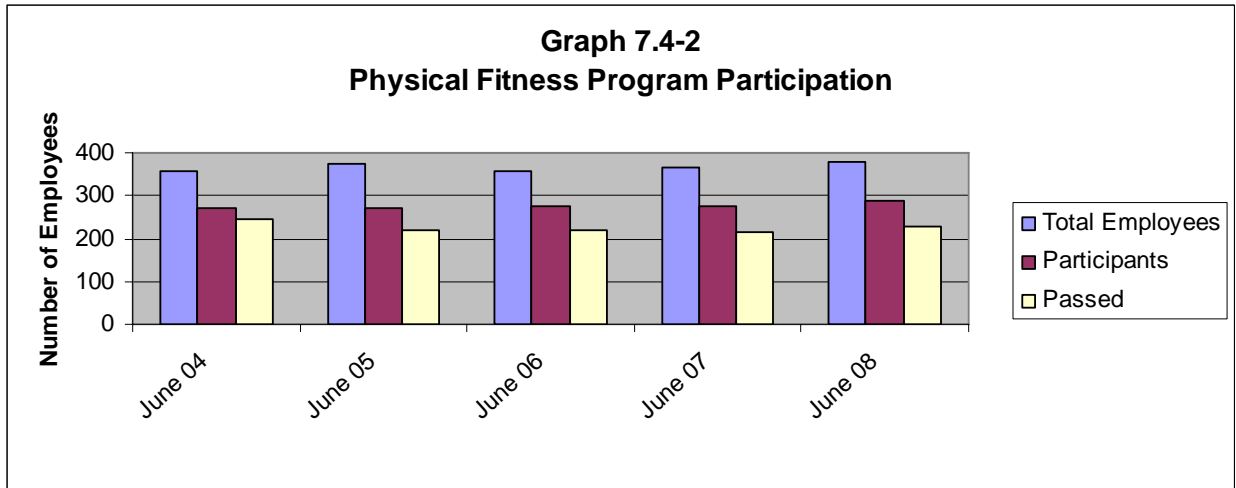


In FY 2008, the SCFC improved the workforce climate by designating smoking areas for employees and adopting a no smoking policy in the offices themselves. Employees were provided with opportunities for health screenings. Monetary assistance is also provided for those that are required to receive medical clearance to participate in the physical fitness program, which is yet another benefit to aid in promoting better health.

With regard to security, the SCFC has taken steps to protect confidential information by installing locks on office doors for key personnel (i.e. Human Resources, Accounting). In addition, social security numbers are now masked on various reports generated.

The SGSF has adopted the moderate level work capacity test (walking 2 miles with a 25-lb. pack in 30 minutes or less) as the standard to measure wildland firefighter physical fitness. Several states have begun implementation of physical fitness programs to reach this goal. The SCFC is involved with this effort.

Participation in the Physical Fitness Program is required for all fireline employees and for those that volunteer to assist with fireline duties. The percentage of employees passing remained fairly constant in 2008 with 79% passing the fitness test.



7.5 *What are your performance levels and trends for your key measures of organizational effectiveness/operational efficiency, and work system performance?*

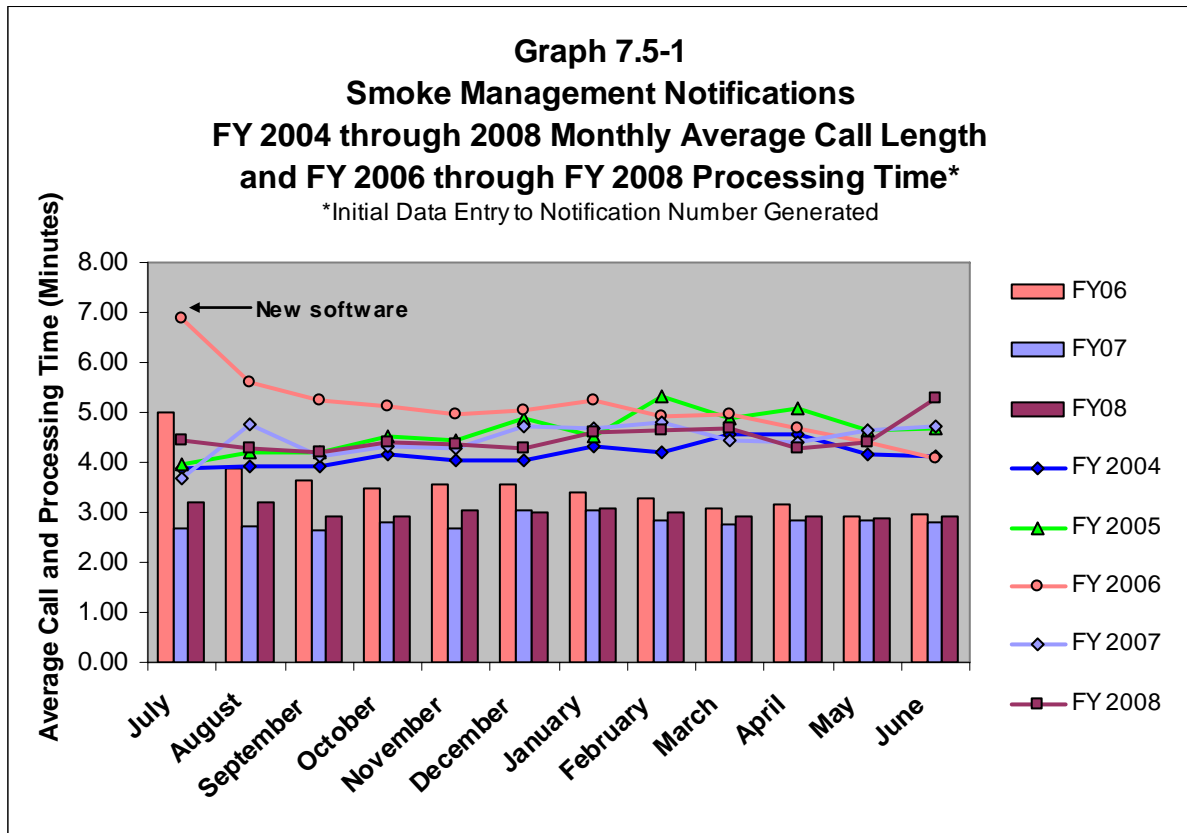
On July 1, 2005, the SCFC implemented a new computer aided dispatch system based on commercial, “off-the-shelf” E911 software. This allowed the SCFC to utilize technology and functions developed for 911 systems and to control costs over custom developed software. A process unique to the SCFC is determining compliance with SCDHEC Smoke Management Guidelines when taking burn notifications for forestry, wildlife or agriculture purposes. A module was added to the E911 dispatching software to automate the process of determining compliance with these Smoke Management Guidelines with the intent to reduce processing time and increase the accuracy in applying these regulations with each notification.

Prior to the installation of the new software, the only measure on how long it took to process a Smoke Management notification would require matching up the notification to the 1-800 phone records. Due to differences in phone numbers provided by the caller and the actual phone they were using to place the call, just over 50% could be matched up. With the new software, “timestamps” exist when the first entry to the notification data entry form is made and when a burn notification number is generated. This period is referred to as the “Processing Time”.

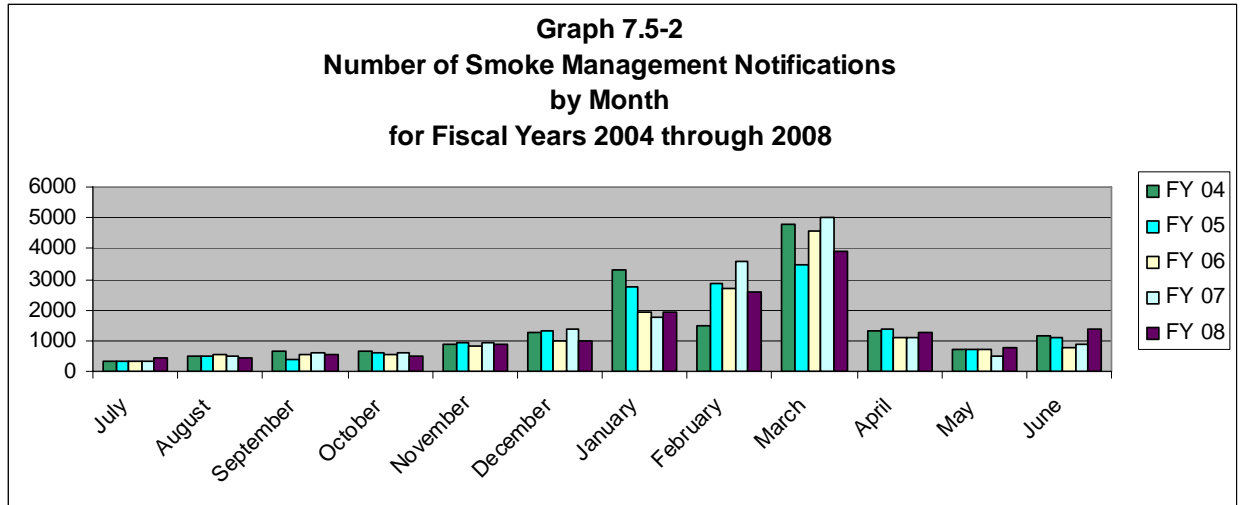
Graph 7.5-1 displays the Average Call Length (in minutes) for Smoke Management Notifications that could be matched up to 1-800 phone records for FY 04 through FY 08. This graph also displays the “Processing Time” for FY 06 through FY 08 that is captured by the new software. The difference in Average Call Length and Processing Time is the period a caller may be on hold. The majority of Smoke Management Notifications are received during a 3-4 hour period in the mornings. Due to limited staffing, callers have to wait for the next available dispatcher. SCFC is looking into new call processing options now available under state contract to help reduce or eliminate this hold time.

The FY 06 data shows a typical “learning curve” associated with a new system. Processing times were longer the first several months but significantly improved. By the end of the first year with the new software, processing times decreased by 30-45 seconds on average

compared to FY 05. Continued improvement in processing time was seen in FY07 and leveled out in FY 08 to an average of 3 minutes.



The number of Smoke Management notifications taken by SCFC dispatch centers varies greatly throughout the year. Graph 7.5-2 demonstrates this wide annual variation showing that the majority of notifications are taken between December and April of each year. Even though call volume increased drastically between December and April, processing times remain consistent. This is an indication of improved efficiencies due to the new software.



7.6 *What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of regulatory/legal compliance and community support?*

The Agency is subject to financial and compliance audits, cooperative Forest Management Reviews by USDA Forest Service, Federal Aviation Administration inspections and regulations, SFM inspections, OSHA regulations, and SCDHEC Smoke Management Guidelines and Outdoor Burning Regulations. We have audits in the areas of accounting, purchasing, and human resources. They have all been performed without findings of questioned costs or non compliance over the past several years. Federal funds require compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The USDA Forest Service monitors compliance on a regular basis.

GLOSSARY

BMP	Best Management Practices
CADS	Computer Aided Dispatch System
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plan
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection Plans
EPMS	Employee Performance Management System
FIA	Forest Inventory and Analysis
FRIS	Forest Resource Information System
GAAP	Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICS	Incident Command System
IMPLAN	Impact Analysis for Planning
IMT	Incident Management Team
IT	Information Technology
MPLS	Multiprotocol Label Switching
NASF	National Association of State Foresters
N&TI	Nursery and Tree Improvement
NPS	National Park Service
NRCS	National Resource Conservation Service
NWTF	National Wild Turkey Federation
OHR	Office of Human Resources
OSHA	Occupational Safety Health Association
PCF	Private Consulting Forester
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SCDHEC	South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
SCDNR	South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
SCEMD	South Carolina Emergency Management Division
SCFA	South Carolina Forestry Association
SCFC	South Carolina Forestry Commission
SCWF	South Carolina Wildlife Federation
SDE	State Department of Education
SFM	State Fleet Management
SGSF	Southern Group of State Foresters
SLED	State Law Enforcement Division
SPB	Southern Pine Beetle
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TPO	Timber Product Output
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
WUI	Wildland Urban Interface